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A Guide
to
The Augsburg Confession
Its History and Its Theology

BY

JUERGEN LUDWIG NEVE

Professor of History of Doctrine and Symbolics
in Hamma Divinity School of Wittenberg
College, Springfield, Ohio

COLUMBUS, OHIO
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*To my dear wife who has been a true helpmeet to
me also in my literary endeavors this
book is dedicated*

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FOREWORD

The contents of this book represent the section on the Augsburg Confession as published in a larger work "Introduction to the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church," which has just come out in a second edition. We thought such a separate publication of this part of that book to be timely because of the approaching quadricentennial of the delivery of the Augsburg Confession at the diet held in Augsburg, 1530.

This treatment of the Confession was prepared especially for the theological seminary. The writer has aimed at limiting himself in discussing the investigations of recent years on the gradual growth of the texts of the Confession to the matters that are absolutely necessary for a view of the situation. The student's mind should not be confused with all the details of what the literature on this subject has produced. He who wants to go deeper into the historical problems must use the books which we have named under "literature" on page 3.

In estimating the larger part of this book, which gives the interpretation of the articles, it should be observed that the theology of the Confession has been set forth with constant regard to its further development by the succeeding confessional writings of Lutheranism. This was far too much overlooked by the critics when this section appeared in the first edition of the above-mentioned work. The doctrinal articles of the Confession, here,

furnish the basis for presenting very much related expression in the Apology, the Catechisms, the Smalcald Articles and the Formula of Concord.

The articles in Part II on the "Abuses" (XXII to XXVIII) have been given in detailed outline only. But the confessionally significant sections have been interpreted in connection with related matters in the specifically doctrinal part of the Confession (I to XXI). As an example we refer to the discussion of the Sunday (Art. XXVIII) in connection with Art. XV (cf. 181 ff.)

The writer is indebted to Dr. Geo. J. Fritschel of the Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, for a careful reading of the manuscript as also to Mr. J. Freas of our own seminary for attending to the needed reconstruction of the topical index. The symbolical writings of the Lutheran Church have been quoted after the paging in the "People's Edition" of the Book of Concord, edited by Dr. H. E. Jacobs (Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia, Penna.).

THE AUTHOR

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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION

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delphia, 1914. See also, by the same author, the following pamphlets: *Die Augsburgische Konfession in kurzem Ueberblick*. Wartb. Publ. House, Chicago; *Are We Justified in Distinguishing Between an Altered and an Unaltered Augustana* as the Confession of the Lutheran Church? Lutheran Literary Board, Burlington, Ia., a reprint from Luth. Church Review.)

1. The Author of the Augsburg Confession was Philip Melanchthon, the colaborer of Luther. He has worded and shaped the Confession from beginning to end. Luther was not in a position to cooperate, as he was not present at the Augsburg diet (1530), but had to remain at Coburg, near Augsburg. Yet the fact is that Melanchthon was all the time building with **Luther's thought-material**. Melanchthon composed the Confession on the basis of sources (Torgau, Schwabach, Marburg articles), and Luther had either written these or at least assisted. It is misleading to say that in the Augsburg Confession and in the Apology, we have Melanchthon's theology in opposition to the theology of Luther as expressed in the Catechism and in the Smalcald Articles. At Augsburg in 1530, Melanchthon was most careful in stating what was the faith of Luther also. The differences between what later has been called "Melanchthonianism" and genuine Lutheranism did not exist at the time of the Augsburg diet.

As to **form**, however, it must be admitted that Luther would not have been able to make the doctrinal statements with the moderation that characterizes this document nor formulated them as beautifully and tersely (compare in this respect the Smalcald Articles). Here the remarkable ability

of Melanchthon as a master in giving form to Creeds, appreciated so much by Luther himself, has stamped the Confession with his individuality.

Note: When Luther at Coburg saw the first draft of the Confession which was sent to him, he wrote that he would not have been able to express himself so mildly, (*"denn ich so sanft und leise nicht treten kann."*)¹

2. The Contents. For a description of the contents of the Augsburg Confession with particular reference to a classification of its articles and the theology presented therein, see pp. 112-114.

3. Why Did Our Confessors at Augsburg First Plan to Present Articles Concerning Abuses Only?

They emphatically denied that they had in any way deviated from the Christian Catholic Church. By "Catholic" Church they understood the Church of the first five centuries, the Church of the Oecumenical Creeds, the Church of the leading fathers from Athanasius (325) up to about Leo the Great (461) and perhaps to Gregory the Great (731). They took the position that errors in doctrine which had crept in later and which never had been codified in an official Creed² should not claim to be Christian Catholic doctrine. So then, distinguishing between the *Christian Catholic* and the *Roman Catholic* Church,³ their plan, in giving an account before the emperor, was to proceed on the ground that they

1. Letters of Luther in De Wette IV, 17.

2. For instance, the Semi-Pelagianism of the mediaeval age which was sanctioned by the condemnation of Gottschalk (853) and by the teaching of men like Duns Scotus and Thomas Aquinas.

3. Cf. our discussion of the term "Catholic" under "Apostles' Creed", p. 55.

were in entire harmony with the teaching of the early Church.⁴ So Melanchthon began his work with writing on what we now have as the second part of the Confession, on the abuses. It has always been assumed that he used for this work the "Torgau Articles."

4. What do we know of **the Torgau Articles** as Source of the Second Part of the Confession?

No document is extant that bears the title: Torgau Articles. And yet there were articles on the abuses in the Church, which were composed by the Wittenberg reformers before they left for Augsburg. For we know that Elector John of Saxony ordered that his theologians (Luther, Melanchthon, Jonas, Bugenhagen) should write articles on the existing Church differences, and hand these to him on March 20th, at Torgau.⁵ In 1830 Foerstemann found in the archives of Weimar six essays, one of which *is now believed to be these Torgau Articles.* A comparison of these with part two of the Confession shows that Melanchthon has made considerable use of them.⁶ *Who may have been the author of these articles?* It cannot have been Luther, because he is spoken of in the document.

4. That there was much self-deception in the supposition that the early church Fathers, such as Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine and Leo the Great were in entire harmony with the doctrinal positions of our reformers is not to be wondered at when we remember that church history at the time of Melanchthon was yet in its swaddling clothes. Melanchthon later found that he had been mistaken at least with respect to the conception on the Lord's Supper. Seeberg, *History of Doctrines*, II, 350; *Corp. Ref.* II, 217.

5. Foerstemann, *Urkundenbuch* I, 42-44.

6. The document is reprinted in Foerstemann's *Urkundenbuch* I, pp. 68-84; also in Th. Kolde, *Augsburg Conf.* (1896), and translated into English in H. E. Jacobs' *Book of Concord* II, 75-86. On the history, compare also Koestlin-Kawerau, *Martin Luther* II, 192; J. W. Richard, *Conf. History*, p. 30 ff.

Melanchthon must have had the chief part in the composition; Kolde and Tschackert believe that Luther aided him.⁷

5. What Occurred to Convince the Lutherans that also Articles on Doctrine Should be Presented?

While they were awaiting the arrival of the Emperor at Augsburg they found that Dr. Eck had just published a pamphlet containing 404 articles against persons that were disturbing the peace of the Church. Here Luther and Melanchthon were put in the same class with Zwingli, Carlstadt and the Anabaptists, such as Hubmeier and Denk. Most skilfully Dr. Eck tried to show that all these errors had been presented already in former ages by men who had been condemned as heretics for these views. Therefore Luther and all his adherents were evidently heretics. And as heretics they must be punished by the emperor according to the laws of the empire. This fact convinced Melanchthon that he must present not only an Apology for the elimination of some ceremonies and abuses, but also a clear and detailed positive statement of what the Evangelical preachers in the Electoral territory taught and practiced. Only in this way the charge that the Lutherans were heretical could be refuted successfully.⁸ He immediately began to write on what we now have in the first twenty-one articles.

7. Kolde, *Hist. Einl.*, p. V; *Aelteste Redaktion*, p. 74; Tschackert, *Unveraenderte Augsb. Conf.*, p. 5.

8. See Augsb. Conf. the Epilogue, p. 47. Up to this time (May 4th) Melanchthon, in letters to Luther, had called it an "Apology" (*Corp. Ref.* II, 39), but from now on he calls it a "Confession" (II, 45).

6. **Sources that Melanchthon must have used for the Composition of the First (Doctrinal) Part of the Augsburg Confession.**

a. There are **Two Documents** that were in existence before the Augsburg Confession was written and which deal more or less with subjects that are discussed in part one of the Augustana: the Schwabach Articles and the Marburg Articles.⁹ Of these the Schwabach Articles are the more important and were used by Melanchthon oftener than the Marburg Articles. The former are more outspoken on matters of difference between Luther and Zwingli than are the articles agreed upon at Marburg.

b. Up to a few years ago it was believed that the **Schwabach Articles** had come into existence *after* the Marburg Articles, which we know were written by Luther at the close of the Marburg Colloquy (Oct. 2nd and 3rd, 1529) for the purpose of codifying agreement and disagreement between the Lutherans and Zwinglians. The traditional view has been that Luther, on his way back from Marburg, wrote the Schwabach Articles to be submitted at a convention to be held in Schwabach as a basis of agreement between the Lutheran princes (the Elector of Saxony and the Margrave of Brandenburg) and the South German cities. And it was thought that the more pointed character of these articles, as compared with those of Marburg, is an indication that Luther regretted his very mild statements in the Marburg Articles, and now took occasion to

9. Both documents are printed in English in Dr. Jacobs' Book of Concord, not the People's Edition.

express himself in stronger terms, not only on the Lord's Supper, but also concerning Christology and the doctrine of original sin.¹⁰ But lately Prof. von Schubert, Heidelberg (Germany), after a new investigation of documents in the Weimar, Ansbach, Nuremberg, and Marburg archives has claimed that these so-called Schwabach Articles were written already in July or August by the Wittenberg theologians, Melancthon being the chief author, but Luther cooperating.¹¹ Luther had these Schwabach Articles with him and rewrote them on Oct. 2 into the Marburg Articles. These articles of agreement were signed by all participants as a preliminary form of concord. Zwingli soon afterwards repudiated them. In the Schwabach Articles we have the first attempt to create a common Confession of German Protestantism, on the basis of which a political agreement was to be effected between Saxony and Brandenburg on the one hand, and the South German cities on the other. The negotiations did not take place, however, until October 16th at Schwabach, and they did not result in the much desired union. The South German cities, being under the influence of Zwingli, insisted upon a modification of the statement concerning the Lord's Supper. To this the Elector of Saxony and Margrave of Brandenburg could not agree for "con-

10. See Moeller-Kawerau, *Church History* III, p. 103 (1907); Th. Kolde, in Hauck's *Realencyclopaedie* (R. E.), vol. XVIII, 2.

11. Prof. von Schubert first communicated the result of his investigations in a lecture, delivered before the Society for Reformation History in Cassel 1908, and then followed it with a very scholarly treatise in the August issue of the *Zeitschrift fuer Kirchengeschichte* (Gotha 1908). Cf. J. L. Neve's article in *Lutheran Quarterly* (Gettysburg), April, 1909. The findings of Prof. v. Schubert, however, have not remained uncontradicted.

science sake.”¹² So the plan of uniting German Protestantism, in order that it might be able to show a solid front against the political force of Romanism, failed. Nevertheless, these Schwabach Articles had their value: they served Melanchthon as a chief source for the construction of the first part of the Augsburg Confession.

7. The Gradual Growth of the Confession during the Days at Augsburg.

a. As we have seen, the Elector of Saxony commissioned Melanchthon to do the work. Already at Coburg, where Luther remained, he began to compose what we now call Part Two of the Confession. He was especially concerned about an **introduction** (*Exordium*) by which the emperor was to be convinced that the Elector of Saxony had always been loyal to the empire and to the Catholic Church and had in no way done wrong in abolishing certain un-Christian customs of recent origin. At Augsburg Melanchthon rewrote this introduction.¹³

b. Soon Melanchthon had so far finished **“the first draft”** of both parts of the Confession that on *May 11th* the Elector could send a special messenger with the document to Luther at Coburg. Luther was to look it over and feel free to write suggestions “on the margin.”¹⁴ On May 15th Luther’s answer came back: “I have read over Magister Philip’s Apology. It pleases me very well, and I know of nothing therein to be improved or

12. Von Schubert, p. 365.

13. *Corp. Ref.* II, 39. Later, we shall see why it had to be set aside and to give place to an introduction written by chancellor Dr. Brueck (cf. p. 86).

14. *Corp. Ref.* II, 47.

changed; nor would it become me, for I cannot move so gently. Christ, our Lord, grant that it may bring much and great fruit as we hope and pray."¹⁵

c. Melanchthon continued to polish and improve the text of the Confession up to the day of the public reading, June 25th, so that soon this text was not longer identical in every detail with that of May 11th. A question much discussed has been: *Was Luther kept informed of the further changes made in the text?* It is now generally admitted that Luther never saw any other text of the Augsburg Confession until after the public reading had taken place, when again a copy was sent him. *This proves* that Luther had no influence on shaping the phraseology of the Confession, and that in this respect it is altogether a work of Melanchthon. *But it does not prove* that there was the very least intention of excluding contributions from Luther. Here "Melanchthonian" theologians (Heppe, Rueckert, Richard) have lost themselves in unwarranted conclusions. At the time, there existed the most complete harmony between Luther and Melanchthon, theologically, so that there was no need of constantly keeping Luther informed of every change that was made. Besides, the suspense in which the Lutherans lived during those days of waiting for the emperor to arrive was of such a nature that the historian has no difficulty in understanding why Luther did not receive a draft every few days, nor was he interested in such a trivial matter.

d. An interesting question for us is: **What did Luther see of the Confession?** How did that

15. De Wette, Briefe, IV, 17.

first draft of May 11th differ from the final form in which the Confession was read at the diet?

(1) To arrive at a conclusion let us note the following: The draft of May 11th, which Luther saw is not known to us. It has not been preserved. Yet a number of years ago (1905) there was discovered in the Nuremberg archives a copy of the Confession which shows what form it had on May 31st, that is twenty-five days before the public reading.¹⁶ And just recently, 1925, the news came that W. Gussmann has found in these same archives a redaction of the *German* text as it read ten days before its delivery, this text being almost in entire agreement with our *textus receptus*.

(2) Now our argument is this: The draft of May 11th cannot have contained what even these last mentioned redactions did not yet have. So we can arrive — at least to some extent — at an answer to the question *what Luther had not yet seen of the final form of the Confession*.

(3) Let us mention some of the details in which the form of May 31st differs from the final wording:

First, at that time the document had yet that long introduction of Melanchthon,¹⁷ in

16. This copy was found by Dr. Carl Schornbaum. He invited Prof. Kolde-Erlangen, the foremost Augustana scholar, to examine the document, and Dr. Kolde soon recognized it to be a translation into German of the Latin text of the Confession as it was at the end of May and as it was handed to the Nuremberg representatives in order that they might confer with their government as to whether it was willing to make common cause with the Saxons. Cf. *Corp. Ref.* II, 78-83. A special value of the discovery consisted in this that it contained that often-mentioned introduction ("Exordium") of Melanchthon which had been lost. Dr. Kolde then published this text with a commentary under the title: "*Die älteste uns bekannte Redaktion der Augsburger Konfession*" (1906).

which he labored to defend the course of the Elector of Saxony. At this time it was the intention to present the Confession in the name of the Elector of Saxony only. Each of the Protestant Estates (Saxony, Brandenburg, Hessa, the South German cities, etc.) was to speak for itself. This plan was finally abandoned, and at once did away with Melancthon's introduction, as shall be seen below under e.

Second, the order of articles was not quite the same. Our Art. IV on Justification had the fifth place, and Art. V had fourth place. Our Articles VII and VIII on the Church were one article. Therefore Article VIII was on Baptism, IX on the Lord's Supper, etc.

Third, Articles XX and XXI were not yet written. Art. XXVII had been rewritten since May 11th,¹⁷ but Melancthon continued to amend this article.¹⁸ Art. XXVIII underwent many changes since Luther saw it, and in its final wording it differs considerably even from the redaction of the end of May.²⁰

Fourth, of special interest are certain differences affecting the doctrinal substance of some of the articles. Art. II did not yet express the rejection of the "Pelagians and others." Art. V did not yet have the words that the Holy Ghost works faith "where and

17. Translated into English from Kolde in Schmauk and Benze, *Confessional Principle*, p. 179 ff.

18. *Corp. Ref.* II, 60.

19. Cf. Kolde, *Aelteste Redaktion*, p. 61.

20. Kolde, pp. 26-31; pp. 63-67. P. Tschackert, *Ungeaenderte Augsburgische Konfession*, pp. 191. 225.

when it pleaseth God." Art. IV said nothing of an imputed righteousness. In Art. VII there was not that twice-repeated "rightly" in the sentence "in which the Gospel is *rightly* taught and the Sacraments *rightly* administered." Our Art. IX stated no doctrine of Baptism, but merely insisted on infant Baptism against the Anabaptists. In Art. XVII on Christ's return to judgment the redaction of the end of May had a remark that was changed before the delivery of the Confession. It was the remark "that all deceased men shall be raised up with the same body in which they died" (cf. p. 255).

These changes and many similar ones, especially in Articles XXVII and XXVIII, show us how different was the Confession in its final reading from the form it had on May 31st and consequently also in the first draft of May 11th, which Luther saw and how painstaking Melanchthon was in his work.

e. The document which Melanchthon had been preparing exclusively in the name of the Elector of Saxony becomes by agreement of the several Estates the common Confession of all the Lutherans at Augsburg. How did this come about? The emperor after long delays was approaching and was soon expected to be in Augsburg. Persistent rumors that the Papists together with the Roman Catholic princes had succeeded in making him very suspicious of the orthodoxy of the Lutherans convinced the Lutheran Estates that they should stand together and hand in a common Confession. For this reason the representatives of Nuremberg, (as we saw under d) copied Melanch-

thon's work and sent it home. The city of Nuremberg asked to be taken in with Saxony. The Margrave of Brandenburg had desired from the beginning to be a party with the Saxon Elector.²¹ The same was the case with Philip of Hessa.²² But there was some special difficulty with him later. He wanted the Zwinglians to be included.²³ This even Melanchthon opposed: (1) because of the revolutionary character of the Zwinglian movement,²⁴ (2) because Melanchthon in his heart was disgusted with the doctrinal position of Zwingli²⁵ and (3) because, considered from a purely political standpoint, Zwingli's symbolical interpretation of the Lord's Supper was especially repulsive to the Romanists. The Lutherans could not risk to endanger their cause by including him and the South German cities who had been drawn over towards the Swiss reformer. Philip of Hessa wished that Art. X on the Lord's Supper be worded differently so that the others might sign it also. But here the Lutherans took a firm stand. He yielded, and they in turn gave him the satisfaction of dropping some more or less open attacks upon the Sacramentarians, which were contained in Melanchthon's introduction and in the article on Mass.²⁶ The signatures of the Confession as we have it show the Estates that had agreed to confess their faith before the emperor and the representatives of Germany. But the in-

21. *Corp. Ref.* II, 69.

22. *Corp. Ref.*, p. 60.

23. Kolde, *Aelteste Redaktion*, p. 40 ff.

24. Zwingli wanted to see Charles V. deposed and Philip of Hessa to become Emperor. *Corp. Ref.* I, 1035. This had become public.

25. *Corp. Ref.* II, 83, 103. "*Dogmata habent intolerabilia.*"

26. Comp. the Art. XVIII in Kolde's *Aelteste Redaktion* with our Art. XXIV; also Foerstemann, *Urkundenbuch* I, 331.

trodition of Melanchthon, on which he had spent so much care, no longer fitted into the situation. It was set aside and Dr. Brueck, the Saxon Chancellor, wrote a new introduction for the common Confession of all the Lutheran Estates present.

8. The Delivery of the Confession.

We have to omit much interesting history because we must confine ourselves to an introduction to the Augsburg Confession as a symbol.²⁷ We shall simply state that the Confession was delivered in Latin and in German on **the 25th of June**, at the palace of the Bishop in Augsburg where the emperor resided during the Diet. The German copy was read with a ringing voice by Dr. Beyer, the assistant Chancellor of Electoral Saxony, and then both copies were handed to the emperor. Charles, taking both copies into his hands, put the Latin copy into his pocket in order to have it translated into French since he did not understand Latin or German sufficiently. It was afterwards taken to Brussels in the Netherlands. The German copy he gave to the Archbishop of Mayence to be deposited in the archives of the empire in that city.

9. A Brief Review of the History of the Texts of the Augsburg Confession.

a. The German Text in the Book of Concord.

The German original of the Confession was deposited in the archives of Mayence. But when the council of Trent was to be held, in 1545, it was taken to Italy and never returned.²⁸ For two hund-

27. A brief review of the history connected with the delivery of the Augsburg Confession is found in J. L. Neve, *Augsbg. Conf.*, pp. 44-48.

28. G. G. Weber, *Kritische Geschichte der Augsburg Konfession*, Vol. II, introduction. Th. Kolde, *Historische Einleitung*, p. XXX.

red years it was the impression that the German text in the Book of Concord, as used among the Germans today,²⁹ was identical with the German copy deposited in Mayence. *What is the history of this misapprehension?* When the Book of Concord was to be published (1580) the promoters of the Concordia desired to insert the authentic German text of the Augsburg Confession. They did not want any of the later editions of Melancthon, but they wanted the original text, the one that had been presented in Augsburg. The original was supposed to be in the archives of Mayence. They did not know that it had been taken to Italy and not returned. In 1566 the court-preacher George Coelestine, of Brandenburg, had been sent to Mayence to secure an authenticated copy of the original Augsburg Confession.³⁰ He brought the text. But he had been deceived by the secretaries of the archive and partly committed an act of deception himself. Dr. Eck had taken it to the Council at Trent and never returned it. The secretaries had put another copy into the old envelope, a copy of inferior value and dating from the time when the Confession was yet in the process of creation. This copy, of course, did not have the signatures of the princes. But Coelestine added these himself.³¹ This text of Coelestine was the one which was published in the

29. Comp. J. T. Mueller, *Symbolische Buecher der ev.-Luth. Kirche, deutsch und lateinisch*, Guetersloh, C. Bertelsmann, 1907, 10th Edition.

30. It was to be incorporated in the *Corpus Doctrinae Brandenburgicum* which was then in preparation and appeared in 1572. These *Corpora Doctrinae* represent the preparatory stages for the creation of the Book of Concord, see article by G. Kawerau in Hauck, *R. E.*, IV, p. 293 f.; also introduction to this book, p. 20; cf. pp. 97 f.

31. Koellner, *Symbolik*, p. 270, note 3, p. 299, note 7. Zoeckler, *Augsburg Conf.*, p. 59. Kolde, *Hist. Einl.*, p. XXXI. Weber I, 236 f.

Book of Concord. Two hundred years later George Gottlieb Weber discovered the deception and published his findings in a work of two volumes.³² This, however, has not led the Lutherans in Germany to make a change in their Book of Concord since the differences are only a matter of formality and since the original text has not been found. Our English text is a translation of the Latin text.

b. What Became of the Latin Text? Charles V. deposited it in the archives at Brussels.³³ He was king over the Netherlands. But when his son, the fanatic Philip II of Spain, had ascended the throne and the Netherlands rose in war against him, he instructed the Duke Alva, his general, on his return to Spain to bring with him the Confession, "in order that they (the Protestants) might not hold it as a Koran" and that he should "be careful that the original be given him, and not a copy, and that no other, not even a trace of it, be left so that so pernicious a book may be forever destroyed."³⁴ From a receipt given, we know that when Alva returned to Spain (1573) he took the Confession with him. It has, no doubt, been destroyed.³⁵

So neither the German nor the Latin original manuscript of the Confession, delivered 1530 at Augsburg, was at hand when the Book of Concord

32. *Kritische Geschichte der Augsb. Konf.* (1783-84). A review of Weber's research and its results are found in Zoeckler, *Augsb. Conf.*, p. 74 ff.

33. W. Lindanus, *Apologeticum ad Germanos* etc. III, p. 92. Hutter, *Concordia Discors* etc. Coloniae 1583, p. 185.

34. Kolde, *Hist. Einl.*, p. XXXI. The Spanish original of this letter was published by J. Doellinger, *Beitraege zur politischen und kirchlichen Kulturgeschichte der letzten sechs Jahrhunderte*, I, 648. Regensburg 1862.

35. Kolde, *Neue Augustana Studien*, p. 744.

was published. It is quite certain that the Latin copy has been destroyed, but the German copy may yet exist in one of the archives of Italy.³⁶ *The German text* in the German edition of the Book of Concord is not the best available form, because it dates from the time when the Confession was not yet fully prepared for delivery.³⁷ *This leads us to inquire concerning the reliability of the text which we use in the English speaking branch of the Lutheran Church.*

10. The First Authorized Edition of the Augsburg Confession — the Editio Princeps.

Immediately after his return from Augsburg, Melancthon began an authentic publication of the Confession. It appeared about the beginning of May, 1531, in Latin and in German.³⁸

a. But how could this work be reliably done since the original texts were not in the possession of the Lutherans? Let us not forget that Melancthon had all the material in hand, from which the final copies for delivery had been made, shortly before the public reading. When the Confession was yet in process of preparation, and especially when it was about completed, there were copies taken from it by the different parties interested. Thirty-nine of such are known.³⁹ Some of them, it is true, were taken when the Confession was yet very incomplete. *To this class belongs the German*

36. Prof. K. von Hase, of Jena, has searched the Vatican library for it, but in vain.

37. Compare Kolde, *Einl.* p. XXXI.

38. Kolde in Schmauck's *Confessional Principle*, p. 523 ff.; Tschackert, *Unveraenderte Augsb. Conf.*, p. 3.

39. Comp. Tschackert, p. 9.

text in the German Book of Concord. But some of these copies were taken after the completion of the document, at the time when the Lutherans were ready to deliver it. These copies have even the signatures affixed, a class of manuscripts regarded as especially reliable. *From the Latin text in its completed form we have six copies and one French translation.*⁴⁰

b. With the original texts lost, by what means can we arrive at a conclusion in the question of the agreement of Melanchthon's Editio Princeps with the originals? The late Prof. Paul Tschackert of Goettingen, has published a book in which, by a careful comparison of all these manuscripts,⁴¹ he has constructed a text in German and Latin, in parallel columns, from which the original and lost copies cannot have differed very materially.⁴² But the exact Latin text of the original cannot be established absolutely.

c. What do we find when we make the comparison? We find that Melanchthon in that first edition of the Confession did indeed seek to improve the text in a number of places. In that age men did not feel that an official document of this kind must not be altered. Luther did the very thing with the Smalcald Articles.⁴³ But it must be remembered

40. Neve, Augsb. Confession, p. 52.

41. Preserved in many (mostly German) archives, enumerated by Tschackert.

42. *Die unveraenderte Augsb. Konf., deutsch und lateinisch, nach den besten Handschriften aus dem Besitze der Unterzeichner*, Leipzig 1910.

43. See p. 347.

that the changes "cannot in any place be regarded as actual alterations of the doctrinal substance."⁴⁴

Note: As indicated, this first Latin edition of the Confession, or *Editio Princeps*, was accompanied by an edition in German which had many more changes than the Latin. We shall not take space to discuss this fact as it is of no practical significance. Our English text is a translation of the Latin and not of the German *Editio Princeps*. Neither shall we discuss the second Latin edition which appeared the same year,⁴⁵ much amplified, nor another edition in German, published in 1533,⁴⁶ because, as Kolde again says, the changes "do not present any alteration in the substance of the doctrine."

11. The "Altered" Augustana of 1540 (Variata).

a. The term **Variata** designates the Latin text of a new edition of the Latin text of the Augsburg Confession.⁴⁷

b. While in the preceding editions the changes, which were many and great, merely aimed at clarifying the thought, in the Latin text of this edition there are **changes of doctrinal significance**. **What are these changes?**

(1) In Art. X on the Lord's Supper two very important phrases, the "*vere adsint*" (truly present) and the "*improbant secus docentes*" (they disapprove of those who teach otherwise) are omitted. What may have caused Melancthon to make these

44. Kolde, see Schmauck p. 524. In two places, however, we have interesting and valuable additions. In Art. XIII the closing paragraph (the rejection of the *opus operatum*); and in Article XVIII the last two paragraphs, beginning with the words "They condemn the Pelagians" etc. have been added.

45. Weber I, pp. 86-91.

46. Weber II, p. 38 ff., p. 56, 82 ff. Schmauck p. 525.

47. The Variata text is published in the *Corp. Ref.* XXVI, 343; also in Kolde's little book "*Die Augb. Konf.*", and translated into English in the 2d vol. of Dr. Jacobs' *Book of Concord*, not People's Edition.

changes? This question has been much discussed and variously answered according to the theological standpoint of the inquirers. The "Melanchthonians" have taken the position that these omissions had no doctrinal significance whatever. Melanchthon had always remained in harmony with Luther on the doctrine of the Real Presence except that he could not always follow him in the use of his strongly realistic language on this subject. And they advocate this *Variata* text as doctrinally identical with the *Editio Princeps* which the Lutheran Church uses. The article in the *Variata* form reads as follows: *De coena Domini docent, quod cum pane et vino exhibeantur corpus set sanguis Christi vescentibus in coena Domini.* (Concerning the Lord's Supper they teach that *with bread and wine* are truly *exhibited* the body and blood of Christ to those that eat in the Lord's Supper). That is not un-Lutheran doctrine. To present the Calvinistic view it would have to read, "*credentibus*," instead of "*vescentibus*," and if exception has been taken to the word "*exhibeantur*" it must be replied that this was the term used in the Wittenberg Concord of 1536, to which Luther himself had subscribed. And yet the question remains unanswered: *Why did Melanchthon omit the two very significant phrases: "truly present" and "they disapprove of those who teach otherwise"?* There must have been a reason. It can have been no other than this: Melanchthon, in his ardent desire to unite all Protestants on the basis of the Augsburg Confession, for which there was some prospect after Zwingli was dead (1531), "wanted to secure for himself and others a basis on which to cooperate with the Swiss theologians."

(Kolde.) There is nothing to prove conclusively that Melanchthon, for his own person, ever departed from the doctrine of the Real Presence. In his last will he solemnly declares his adherence to Luther's Smalcald Articles, and he knew very well what Luther says there of the Sacrament. But he had lost, more and more, the appreciation of the difference at least as it existed between the South Germans (Calvin) and Luther.⁴⁸ At first no one took special offense at these omissions. But because later (after 1552) the Melanchthonians in Saxony endeavored to introduce Calvinism under the cover of the *Variata* (the Crypto-Calvinistic controversies) and because the Calvinists approved of the Augsb. Conf. in that form the text of Article X of this edition was viewed with suspicion.

(2) Into this category of changes that have a doctrinal significance belong also certain expressions and passages in Articles XVIII, IV, V, and XX, "with their emphasis upon repentance and good works in a manner characteristic of synergism and corresponding with the new edition of Melanchthon's *Loci* of 1535."⁴⁹

48. Comp. our discussion of the tenth article, section 7 (pp. 207 ff.); also Kurtz *Kirchengeschichte* (14th edition), § 161, 9; Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom* I, 240. And on the whole question *Corp. Ref.* II, 25, 104, 382, 822, 217, 837, 841; III, 292; VII, 780, 884; VIII, 358; IX, 387, 962, 933.

49. Zoekler, *Die Augsburg Konf.*, p. 37. Melanchthon labored, after 1535, for a certain co-ordination of the human and the Divine factor in conversions. Prof. Paul Tschackert points out some striking deviations of the *Variata* from the *Invariata*. In Art. V of the Confession, where the *Invariata* reads, "through Word and Sacrament . . . the Holy Spirit is given", there the *Variata* says, "When we comfort ourselves (*erigemus nos*) through faith, then *simultaneously* (*simul*) the Holy Spirit is given us". Again in Art. V the *Variata* has this sentence, "When we hear or consider the Gospel, or use the Sacraments and comfort ourselves (*nos consolamur*) through faith, then *simultaneously* (*simul*)

c. **Dr. Philip Schaff on the Variata:** "The edition of 1540, which appeared in connection with an improved edition of the Apology, differs so widely from the first that it was subsequently called the *Altered Augsburg Confession (Variata)*, in distinction from the *Unaltered (Invariata)* of 1530 or 1531. It attracted little attention until after the death of Melanchthon (1560), when it created as much trouble as the insertion of the *filioque* clause in the Nicene Creed. The Altered Confession, besides a large number of valuable additions and real improvements in style and the order of subjects, embodies the changes in Melanchthon's theology, which may be dated from the new edition of his *Loci Communes*, 1535, and his personal contact with Bucer and Calvin. He gave up, on the one hand, his views on absolute predestination, and gradually adopted the synergistic theory (which brought him nearer to the Roman Catholic system); while on the other hand (departing further from Romanism and approaching nearer to the Reformed Church), he modified the Lutheran theory of the Real Presence, at least so far as to allow the Reformed doctrine the same right in the evangelical churches. He never liked the Zwinglian view of a symbolical presence, nor did he openly adopt the Calvinistic view of a spiritual Real Presence, but he . . .

the Holy Spirit is working." Note the repeated use of the word "*simul*". In article XVIII of Free Will, the *Invariata* says, "spiritual righteousness is worked by the Holy Ghost who is received in the heart through the Word of God." Here the *Variata* says: "But spiritual righteousness is effected in us when we are assisted (*adjuvamus*) by the Holy Spirit." This same word "*adjuvati*" is also put into Art. XX. So Melanchthon, after changing his conviction concerning Free Will, "put his own private theology into the *Variata*". P. Tschackert, *Die Entstehung der Luth. und Ref. Kirchenlehre*, p. 291.

regarded the difference between this and the Lutheran view as no bar to Christian fellowship and Church Communion. Hence, in the edition of 1540, he laid greater stress on the necessity of repentance and good works, and softened down the strong expressions against the freedom of will. The other and more important change which gave most offense to orthodox Lutherans, is in the tenth article, concerning the Lord's Supper, where the clause on the Real Presence, and the disapproval of dissenting views are omitted, and the word *exhibeantur* is substituted for *distribuantur*. In other words, the article is so changed that Calvin could give it his hearty consent, and even Zwingli, with the exception, perhaps, of the word *truly* ("truly exhibited") — might have admitted it."⁵⁰

d. The Variata as a Recognized Text in the Lutheran Church. At first it was used everywhere without suspicion. Even Luther did not protest against the *Variata*, at least not publicly.⁵¹ It was during the year when hope was entertained that the Wittenberg Concord might unite all Protestantism and when Luther also wanted to do his utmost to cultivate friendly relations with the Swiss theologians.⁵² At the Colloquy in Worms with the Romanists (1540) it was the *Variata* which the

50. *Creeds of Christendom* I, 240 f.

51. Kurtz, in his Church History, quotes him as having expressed his disapproval in these words: "Phillipe, you do not right in so often changing the Augsburg Confession, for it is not yours, but the Church's book." But we cannot prove this to be historical, and it has been omitted in the 14th edition of this work. Concerning the origin of this report, see J. L. Neve, *Altered and Unaltered Augustana*, p. 19. Also Koellner, *Symbolik*, p. 237.

52. Enders, *Briefwechsel*, XI, 294, Erl. Ed. of Luther's works 55, p. 190. Koestlin Kawerau, *Leben Luthers* (4th ed.) II, p. 350 and 352. Planck, *Geschichte der Entstehung*, etc. III, Book 8, p. 399 ff.

Lutherans handed to the chairman of the conference. It was used in the schools. So the *Variata* had entirely supplanted the *Editio Princeps*.

e. **The Lutheran Church returns again to the Editio Princeps.**

(1) The first to protest against the *Variata* were the Romanists. Dr. Eck protested at the **Colloquy in Worms** (1540), that this edition differed materially from the original Confession delivered at Augsburg. And at another colloquy in Worms, 1557, the Catholics demanded with malice and cunning that first of all those Lutherans *who had deserted the Augsburg Confession* should be condemned, and the Jesuit Canisius spoke of a *pure and an adulterated Augsburg Confession*.⁵³

(2) In 1560, at the **disputation between Victor Strigel and Matthias Flacius in Weimar**, we have the first discussion of the differences between *Variata* and *Invariata* among Lutherans themselves. Here Flacius insisted on a material difference between Melancthon's later and former editions of the Augustana.⁵⁴ From now on the attitude of the Church is directed to the distinction between an altered and an unaltered Augsburg Confession. Not that the terms "*Variata*" and "*Invariata*" were coined at once, but the distinction was there and

53. Hauck, *R. E.* XII, 525. Kolde, *Hist. Einl.*, p. XXVII. Salig, *Historie der Augsb. Con.* III, 308. The Romanists never lost track of this discovery (that the editions of the Augsburg Confession, then in use, were not in agreement with the original copies delivered at Augsburg), on which, according to their conception, the Augsburg Religious Peace treaty of 1555 was based, and the Jesuits from this time forth never ceased that agitation which finally resulted in the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War. Compare Zoeckler, *Augsb. Conf.*, p. 67 ff.

54. Here it was that he told that story of Luther's disapproving remark to Melancthon, which we refuse to accept as historical, because it cannot be proved by clear testimony (see footnote 51).

became fixed more and more in the consciousness of leading Lutheran theologians. Suspicion against the *Variata* increased when Calvinism, favored by the Melanchthonians, entered upon an aggressive propaganda in Germany with constant appeal to the text of the *Variata*.⁵⁵ **The Day of the Princes at Naumburg** (1561) is characteristic of the confusion in which the Lutheran Church found itself in its endeavor to decide upon an authoritative text. Here the representatives compared the *Variata* of 1540 with the earlier editions of the Augustana and, for the first time, found to their amazement, how numerous were the differences. They finally agreed to subscribe to the first edition of 1531, (*Editio Princeps*), but as a concession, especially to Elector Frederick Palatine (who soon afterwards went over to Calvinism), they declared in a "Preface," which was to accompany the *Editio Princeps*, that the *Variata* contained no new doctrine, but simply that in it the "Confession was repeated in a somewhat more stately and elaborate manner, explained and enlarged on the basis of the Holy Scriptures." This agreement at Naumburg soon afterwards broke to pieces. The Non-Melanchthonians who had decided to take their stand upon the side of genuine Lutheranism did not want that recognition of the *Variata*, but they desired instead a recognition of the Smalcald Articles of Luther as

55. Calvin himself in a public reply to Joachim Westphal, declared that he could accept the Augsburg Confession "*in the way it has been interpreted by its own author*", and he stated that in 1541 both Melancthon and Cruciger had expressed themselves as being in entire harmony with his (Calvin's) doctrine of the Sacraments. Salig I, 491. Staehlin, *John Calvin* I, 234.

a safeguard for the correct interpretation of the Augustana.⁵⁶

(3) General Agreement in Returning to the Editio Princeps. The Lutheran Churches of the different German states, feeling the need of doctrinal unity at least in their own dominions, began to establish, independently of each other, a collection of confessional writings, which was declared *norma normans* for the teaching of the Divine Word. These are the so-called *Corpora Doctrinae*.⁵⁷ Some of these were Melanchthonian in character, containing the *Variata* and the chief writings of Melanchthon, such as the Apology, the Confessio Saxonica, the *Loci* (ed. 1556), the *Examen Ordinandorum*, etc.,⁵⁸ while others were Lutheran in character and contained (besides the Augsburg Confession, in *Editio Princeps* text, and Apology) the writings of Luther, especially the Smalcald Articles and the Catechisms.⁵⁹ In 1580 the Book of Concord took the place of the Melanchthonian *Corpus Doctrinae* in Electoral Saxony, and most of the other dominions followed. As to the Latin text, the Book of Concord was to have the *Editio Princeps* of 1531.⁶⁰

56. Comp. the article of Kawerau in Hauck's *R. E.* XIII, 265; also Richard, *Conf. Hist.*, p. 296.

57. See article of Prof. Kawerau in Hauck's *R. E.* IV, 293-298. Cf. our "Introduction," p. 20.

58. Such was the *Corpus Doctrinae Philippicum* for Electoral Saxony.

59. To this class belong the *Corpora Doctrinae* of Brunswick (1561), of Brandenburg (1572), of Prussia (1567), of Brunswick-Wolfenbuettel (1570), of Thuringia (1570), and of Brunswick-Lueneburg (1576).

60. Only by a mistake which was soon corrected, the editors of the Book of Concord at first put in Melanchthon's second edition of the Augustana. For this, Melanchthon soon substituted the real *Editio Princeps*. Respecting the German text, see above, sub. 9.

(4) **Today there is no part of the Lutheran Church that has the Variata as its Confessional basis.** In Germany the Book of Concord has the Latin text of the *Editio Princeps* and the less reliable German text which was discussed sub. 9, a. The *Variata* is known only among theologians and, as a text, has nowhere confessional significance. The English branch of the Lutheran Church in America uses the English translation of the Latin *Editio Princeps*. This text is the only one recognized and the *Variata* text is hardly known.⁶¹

But if this is the case then a very practical question remains to be answered:

f. Why Does the Lutheran Church of today insist upon a Subscription to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession? If there is no other text in use why such a qualification?

(1) It must be admitted, as we have seen, that, strictly speaking, even the *Editio Princeps* cannot be called "unaltered," because it has some changes from the original. But we all know what is meant when we employ that term. The *Editio Princeps* has no changes from the original that are of doctrinal significance. And we call the text of 1540 a *Variata*, because in it expression has been given to Melancthonian theology, a theology which labored to bridge over the gulf between Lutheranism and Calvinism in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper by treating these fundamental distinctions as mat-

61. See it translated into English in vol. II of the larger edition of Dr. Jacobs' Book of Concord.

ters of indifference,⁶² and which in the doctrine of Free Will, sacrificed essential elements of the *sola gratia* theology of Luther.⁶³

(2) But to return to the question: *Why should the Lutheran Church of today insist upon a subscription to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession?* Our answer is this: While the *Variata*, as a document and as a text, is nowhere in use, yet the theology of the document is a danger for the Lutheran Church of today as well as during the time of the Crypto-Calvinistic and the Synergistic controversies. The theology advocated by the champions of the *Variata* is a constant temptation for the adherents of the Augsburg Confession to lose themselves in the direction of indifference to the old historical issues between Lutheranism and Calvinism, and in the direction of Synergism. There was an historical occasion for the Lutheran Church at the time of the publication of the Formula of Concord to emphasize the adherence to the *Unaltered Augsburg Confession*, and since there have always been those who purposely rejected this qualification, because they wanted to hold the way open for an approach of Lutheranism to Melancthonianism and to Calvinism, therefore the qualification *Unaltered* is of importance today in the formula of confessional subscription.

62. In Art. X of the *Variata* we have the unconscious beginnings of a theology which in the Crypto-Calvinistic troubles became the disturbing element and which in a following age received a temporary expression in Syncretism, and finally became permanently embodied in the Union movements of 1817 which have lamentably altered the confessional status of large sections of the Lutheran Church.

63. P. Tschackert, *Entstehung der luth. und ref. Kirchenlehre*, p. 291.

Note: As to how the Augsburg Confession has been regarded in the successive ages of Lutheran history and what has been its significance I refer to the discussion in my book on the "Augsburg Confession" (ut supra) pp. 53-55.

The Introduction to the Augsburg Confession.

This introduction was written by the Saxon Chancellor, Dr. Brueck. How this came about, has been shown in our "Historical Introduction" § 7, e (compare with a). It is written in the exceedingly long-winded official language of the lawyers of that day. The contents in our own language in the form of a synopsis are as follows:

The emperor has called the diet to discuss the Turk question and the religious dissension. Each of these two things was to be heard and considered in order to settle the matter. 1-3. The Lutherans are to be heard. 5. The Emperor has demanded from each side a doctrinal statement in Latin and German. Such a statement has now been drawn up by the Lutherans and is herewith presented. 6-8. If the Romanists will now present similar writings, then the Lutherans are willing for negotiations. In case such endeavors should be in vain, they have done their part. 9-14. In case that these negotiations should be in vain they hereby appeal to a free German Christian council as it had been promised by the Emperor in 1526 and 1529. 15-24.

Remarks: The Emperor is addressed with exquisite terms of respect. More than twenty times we read: Your Imperial Majesty, or Your Majesty. The Pope is simply called: Roman Pontiff (three times) and Chief Pontiff (once). Another thing that deserves to be noted in this introduction is

that the Confession is spoken of as resting upon "the Holy Scriptures and the pure Word of God" (6) and in the Apology the fact is emphasized again and again that the doctrine of the Augsburg Confession is only an assertion of the Scripture doctrine.

The Articles of the Confession.

These are divided into two parts. The first twenty-one state thetically and antithetically the chief doctrines of the followers of Luther with the purpose of proving before the emperor and the whole public that their faith is in harmony with that of the *old Catholic Church* as expressed in the Oecumenical Creeds. The last seven articles deal with the abuses of the *Roman Catholic Church*, but they also contain much that is supplementary to the doctrinal articles of the first part.

Melanchthon merely numbered the articles. The superscriptions are later additions and in some cases incorrect.

Before taking up one article after the other in detail we offer the following as an outline in order to facilitate for the student the practice of familiarizing himself with the contents of the Confession:

(1) *The doctrine of God* (Theology): Art. I, of God, the Triune.

(2) *On man* (Anthropology): Art. II, of original sin; supplemented by Art. XVIII, of free will, supplemented further, by Art. XIX, of the cause of sin.

(3) *"The Son of God"* (Christology): Art. III. In connection with this may be taken Art. XXI: Of the invocation of saints, with the thought: Christ is the only Mediator.

(4) *The central doctrine of man's salvation* (Soteriology): Art. XII: Of Confession; Art. IV: Of justification, Art. V: Of the origin and cause of faith, Art. VI: Of the new obedience (or: The relation of sanctification to justification); supplemented by Art. XX: On faith and good works.

(5) *The doctrine of the Church and its institutions* (Ecclesiology): Art. VII, on the essence of the Church; Art. VIII, on the administration of the sacraments by insincere ministers, or: On the efficacy of Word and Sacraments; Art. IX to XIII, on the sacraments (baptism, eucharist, confession, use of the sacraments). Art. XIV, on the ministry; Art. XV, on Church orders and customs. With Art X compare Art. XXII and Art. XXIV, on the Mass; with Art. XI compare Art. XXV, on Confession; with Art. XV compare Art. XXVI, on Fasting, Art. XXVII, on Monasticism, Art. XXVIII, on Episcopal Authority.

(6) "*Civil Affairs*": Art. XVI defending matrimony (comp. Art. XXIII, on Celibacy of the Priests), rejecting communism and asserting the right of government.

(7) *Christ's return for judgment* (Eschatology): Art. XVII with the rejection of chiliasm and the final restoration of the wicked.

This outline⁶⁴ raises the question whether Melanchthon aimed at any *system* of doctrines. There was no aim at a system of theology in the way we speak of that today; in choosing and selecting the materials Melanchthon was guided by practical

64. Compare Zoeckler, p. 95, and Richard, pp. 104-122.

needs of the hour, but he presented his material in a well arranged order.

One of these was the conciliatory interest. For conciliatory reasons Melancthon has often desisted from saying what should have been said: There is in the Confession no rejection of purgatory (which Luther missed), no teaching of the priesthood of all believers. The papacy is not even mentioned. Nothing is said on the worshipping of Mary. With regard to the *opus operatum* see our discussion of Article XIII.

The Confession was to be an "apology," and pains were taken to defend the Lutherans in the points where they had been accused of teaching false doctrines.

Yet there is a certain order in the arrangement of the articles. To understand that arrangement, it must not be overlooked that the last four articles of the first part, from XVIII to XXI, have been added for supplementary purposes, with the view of further explaining some important doctrines of the preceding articles. So we have the real body of the doctrines in Articles I to XVII: Art. I begins with God and Art. XVII closes with Christ's return for judgment. This indicates the intended order.

PART I

The Doctrinal Articles of the Confession Interpreted.

The English text which here follows is the one that is found in the People's Edition of the Book of Concord, prepared by Dr. H. E. Jacobs. The words in brackets are from the German *Editio Princeps*. The Latin text, here given, represents the *Editio Princeps*, the first edition prepared by Melanchthon for print (cf. p. 19ff.).

The doctrinal articles (1-21) only are dealt with in the form of connected interpretation. The articles on abuses (22-28) are given in outline (see "Foreword").

ARTICLE ONE

Of God

Our Churches, with common consent, do teach, that the decree of the Council of Nicaea concerning the Unity of the Divine Essence and concerning the Three Persons, is true and to be believed without any doubting, that is to say, there is one Divine Essence which is called and which is God: eternal, without body, without parts, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things, visible and invisible; and yet that there are three Persons, of the same essence

Ecclesiae magno consensu apud nos docent, decretum Nicaenae synodi de unitate essentiae divinae et de tribus personis verum et sine ulla debitatione credendum esse. Videlicet, quod sit una essentia divina, quae et appellatur et est Deus, aeternus, incorporeus, impartibilis, immensa potentia, sapientia, bonitate, creator et conservator omnium rerum, visibilium et invisibilium; et tamen tres sint personae, eiusdem essentiae et potentiae, et co-aeternae, Pater, Filius et Spiritus Sanctus. Et nomine

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and power, who also are co-eternal, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. And the term "person" they use as the Fathers have used it, to signify, not a part or quality in another, but that which subsists of itself.

They condemn all heresies which have sprung up against this article, as the Manichaeans who assumed two principles [gods], one Good, and the other Evil; also the Valentinians, Arians, Eunomians, Mohammedans, and all such. They condemn also the Samosatenes, old and new, who contending that there is but one Person, sophistically and impiously argue that the Word and the Holy Ghost are not distinct Persons, but that "Word" signifies a spoken word, and "Spirit" [Ghost] signifies motion created in things.

personae utuntur ea significatione, qua usi sunt in hac causa scriptores ecclesiastici, ut significet non partem aut qualitatem in alio, sed quod proprie subsistit.

Damnant omnes haereses, contra hunc articulum exortas, ut Manichaeos, qui duo principia ponebant, bonum et malum, item Valentinianos, Arianos, Eunomianos, Mahometistas et omnes horum similes. Damnant et Samosatenos, veteres et neotericos, qui quum tantum unam personam esse contendant, de Verbo et de Spiritu Sancto astute et impie rhetoricantur, quod non sint personae distinctae, sed quod Verbum significet verbum vocale, et Spiritus motum in rebus creatum.

The first article of our Confession is based upon the theology of the Oecumenical Creeds. Although the "decree of the council of Nicaea" alone is mentioned, this article throughout has references to the first part of the Athanasian Creed, which treats of the Trinity (see in this book, p. 74 f.). It is in the Athanasian Creed where we find the term "person."

The contents of our article can be analyzed as follows:

I. THETICAL.

1. **There is only One God** ("there is one divine essence").

2. But this one God exists in **Three Persons** ("that there are three persons"), namely Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

3. A **Definition** of the term "*person*" is given; ("and the term 'person' they use as the Fathers have used it, to signify, not a part or quality in another, but that which subsists of itself"). Something negative and positive is here mentioned.

a. **Negative:** "*Not a part or quality in another.*" This has reference to the Samosatenes (mentioned below) who, in the interest of their Monarchianism ("contending that there is but one person") sophistically and impiously argue that the Word and the Holy Ghost are not distinct Persons, but *that 'Word' signifies a spoken word, and 'Spirit' signifies motion created in things.*"

b. **Positive:** "That which subsists of itself." (Latin: *Quod proprie subsistit*). The modern meaning of person (unity of self-consciousness and self-determination) comes near to what is here intended to be expressed, though it has to be used with discrimination. Each person in the Trinity has *self-consciousness*, which is seen from the use of the personal pronouns "I," "Thou," "He"; yet there remains a strong emphasis upon the "We." And with even more discrimination must we speak of the *self-determination* of each person in the Trinity, because the will and determination of the one is in perfect harmony with the will of the others. *In what sense is this term "person" to be taken?*

Melanchthon says: "And the term 'person' they (the Lutheran churches) use as the Fathers have used it." But we find that all the Fathers did not use that term in one and the same sense.⁶⁵ So there seems to be only one way for us to find the sense in which our article wants to understand the term "person," namely, to investigate what was regarded as orthodox doctrine of the Trinity by the Fathers who framed and confirmed the Nicene Creed at Nicea and during the following discussions and who more and more united in the phraseology which was later expressed in the Athanasian Creed. Melanchthon mentions as essential "that which subsists of itself." It was this which the Samosatenes (dynamistic Monarchians) rejected. A. v. Oettingen expresses it fittingly as follows: "*selbstaendige Bewusstseins- und Willensformen des einen goetlichen Wesens.*"

4. None of the Three Persons has the Divine Essence less than the Other. Each has it in a perfect manner, each is equal to the other in power, all are co-eternal. Text: "that there are three persons, of the same essence and power, who are also co-eternal" (against Arians and Eunomians, see below).

5. This One Divine Essence is "eternal, without body, without parts, of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things, visible and invisible." The point to be made is that while the Triune God is to be thought of in "persons" yet He is above all human limitations. (Anthropomorphism.)

65. Comp. Dr. J. A. Brown, First Series of *Holman, Lectures*, p. 19.

II. ANTITHETICAL.

Three classes of errorists are here rejected:

1. Those that Deny the One Essence.

a. "The **Manichaeans** who assumed two principles, one Good, and the other Evil." In order to explain the existence of sin the Manichaeans taught double principles or eternal beings. There were Manichaeans through the whole medieval ages. The Cathari and Albigenses, belonging to a more recent past, were especially abhorred by the Church; and malicious opponents of the Lutherans, like Dr. Eck, labored to identify them with these semi-heathen sects.⁶⁶

b. "Also the **Valentinians**" (Gnostics) who taught a multiplicity of deities emanating from a divine source in pairs (σύνυγι) and thus putting a peculiar kind of dualism into the conception of God. Zoeckler suggests that the special cause for mentioning this one kind among the great variety of Gnostics must have been due to the recent disputation of Melanchthon with Joh. Campanus in Wittenberg, an Anti-Trinitarian.

2. Such as teach one God, but deny that this One God Exists in Three Persons.

a. **Mohammedans**, the representatives of the abstract-monotheistic opposition to our Christian doctrine of the Trinity. The Mohammedans are an exception among all others mentioned here insofar as they are the only party that has no relation to Christianity. The reason for mentioning them must

66. Kurtz, *Church History*, p. 108, 1; Zoeckler, *Augsb. Confession*, p. 130; Plitt, *Einleitung* I, 529; Meusel, *Handlexicon*. A. G. Rudelbach, *Reformation, Luthertum und Union*, pp. 71-77.

have been the writing of Dr. Eck who, in his 404 articles, had put the Lutherans on a parallel with the Turks (worse than the Turks "*Turcis pejores*," cf. Plitt I, 527 ff.; II, 5 ff.) and because the Mohammedans were at that time endangering Christian Europe.

b. "The **Samosatenes**, old and new."

The old Samosatenes: It seems strange that of Monarchianism only the one wing is mentioned and rejected in our Confession. The Samosatenes represent the so-called dynamistic Monarchianism, which, in the manner of the old Ebionites, emphasized the unity of God, making the Logos or Son a mere power with which the man Jesus was endowed, and also making the Holy Spirit an impersonal power. The other wing of Monarchianism, the so-called modalistic form, as represented by Sabellius and, therefore, named, Sabellianism, is not mentioned by name in our article nor anywhere in the Lutheran Symbols,⁶⁷ but their views are rejected in confessing three distinct persons.

The new Samosatenes: Such as Denk and Hetzer are meant.⁶⁸ These Anti-Trinitarians, as also those who came after them (Dav. Joris, L. and F. Socinus), were more of the dynamistic type. This, perhaps, was the cause for Melanchthon's course in just mentioning this one wing of the Monarchians.⁶⁹ Unitarianism is Samosatean in character. Melanchthon had such as Denk and

67. Different it is in the Reformed Confessions. They reject Sabellianism, for instance in *Confessio Belgica*. Art. 9; *Helvetica* II, chap. 3.

68. Cf. Kurtz, *Church History*, 14th ed. (1906), § 159, 1.

69. Yet some of the later Anti-Trinitarians, like Seb. Frank and Michael Servetus, were Sabellians.

Hetzer in mind. They considered God as an abstract unity, denied the divinity of Christ, and regarded the Spirit as an impersonal power. Particularly Hetzer taught, as our Confession here says, "that the Word and the Holy Ghost are not distinct persons, but that 'Word' signifies a spoken word, and 'Spirit' signifies the motion created in things." Cf. Rudelbach, *ut supra*, with regard to the teaching of Michael Servetus, p. 82.

3. Those that admit Three Persons, but Subordinate Son and Spirit to the Father.

a. The **Arians**. Arianism is the heretical climax of the old subordination view of the relation of the Son to the Father. The Son is a premundane creature of the Father, but not co-eternal, not of one essence with the Father. At best, He is a kind of demi-god. Against Arianism was directed what we quoted from our article (sub. 1, 4): "three persons, of the *same* essence and power, who are also *co-eternal*." The Son does not have the divine essence in a lesser degree than the Father.

b. The relation of the Arians to the **Eunomians** is that of the superlative to the comparative in grammar. The Eunomians emphasized the teaching of Arianism to the extent of making the Son "unlike to the Father."⁷⁰

70. Kurtz, Engl. ed. 1888, § 50, 3.

ARTICLE TWO⁷¹

Of Original Sin

Also they teach, that since the Fall of Adam, all men begotten according to nature, are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence; and that this disease, or vice of origin, is truly sin, even now condemning and bringing eternal death upon those not born again through baptism and the Holy Ghost.

They condemn the Pelagians and others, who deny that the vice of origin is sin, and who to obscure the glory of Christ's merits and benefits, argue that man can be justified before God by his own strength and reason.

Item docent, quod post lapsum Adae omnes homines, secundum naturam propagati, nascantur cum peccato, hoc est, sine metu Dei, sine fiducia erga Deum et cum concupiscentia, quodque hic morbus seu vitium originis vere sit peccatum, damnans et afferens nunc quoque aeternam mortem his, qui non renascuntur per baptismum et Spiritum Sanctum.

Damnant Pelagianos et alios, qui vitium originis negant esse peccatum et, ut extenuent gloriam meriti et beneficiorum Christi, disputant hominem propriis viribus rationis coram Deo justificari posse.

From God our Confession proceeds to man and treats of his misery in sin. The relation of this article to the next and to the central article of our Confession (IV on Justification) is clear. The sinfulness and condemnation, the absolute helpless guilt and hopeless depravity of man is first to be established before the need of atonement and justification can be seen. So Melancthon says in the Apology: "The recognition of Original Sin is necessary. For

71. In the interpretation of this article we decided to make large use of Dr. Charles Porterfield Krauth's discussion of Art. II of the Augsburg Confession in his work "Conservative Reformation and its Theology" (Philadelphia, 1872). It is one of the finest gems that can be found anywhere in American Lutheran literature, and its leading thoughts deserve to be widely studied.

the magnitude of the grace of Christ cannot be understood, unless our diseases be recognized" (B. of C., p. 80). This article is an integral part of the material principle of the Reformation, the organic basis of the doctrine of justification by faith. And it is no exaggeration when Claus Harms says: "He who rejects Original Sin overthrows the whole Christianity."⁷²

1. THE ORIGIN OF MAN'S SINFUL CONDITION.

a. It is traced back to the "fall of Adam" (*post lapsum Adæ*). So it has been transmitted from our progenitors, and from them as sinful parents we have inherited it. Therefore, the designation "vice of origin" (*vitium originis*) in the text of our article.⁷³ This is opposed to Pelagianism which taught that "all good and evil, all praiseworthiness or blameworthiness is in actual sin, is in actual disobedience or transgression. Sin, therefore, cannot come by birth, but only by acts of free will. Adam could not originate sin once for all, but each original sinner must originate sin in his own case — the first sin of the human nature, which is in him."

b. But tracing our sinful condition backward **we must stop with the "fall of Adam."** We must not go back still further, even to the creation of man, thus making the *peccatum originis* a *peccatum naturale*. Against this doctrine of the Manichæ-

72. Zoeckler, *Augsb. Confession*, p. 139; compare S. Sprecher in *Holman Lecture*, first series, p. 41.

73. This term, coined by Tertullian in his *De Anima*, 41, is the strongest possible term that could be chosen. The very familiar expression *peccatum originis* was not used by Melancthon in this article, although he always employs it in the Apology.

ans, which would make man unredeemable, Art. XIX of the "Cause of Sin" is directed. Sin does not belong to our substance, but it has come into man as something foreign to him.

2. THE EXTENT OF ORIGINAL SIN.

Our article says that "all men, *begotten according to nature*, are born with sin." So **Christ is excepted** because He was born in a supernatural way through the influence of the Holy Spirit and therefore was sinless (Heb. 4:15, 7:26). But **Mary, the mother of Christ, is included** (against the Roman Catholic Church) as she was begotten according to nature.

3. THE DEFINITION OF ORIGINAL SIN.

"Born with sin, that is without the fear of God, without trust in God, and with concupiscence." First something negative and then something positive is mentioned. The negative is introduced with a double "without" (*sine*), and the positive by one "with" (*cum*). First the negative and then the positive, is the order in the **Latin text** of which our English is a translation. In the **German text** the order is reversed: first the positive (dass sie all von Mutterleibe an voll boeser Lust und Neigung sind), then the negative (keine wahre Gottesfurcht, keinen wahren Glauben an Gott von Natur haben koennen). This *sine* and *cum* is a splendid synopsis of the Lutheran doctrine; both must always be confessed.

a. Negative: "Without the fear of God, without trust in God." This constitutes a real

want.⁷⁴ In the second edition of the Confession Melancthon chose the following words: "and can have by nature no *true* fear of God, no *true* love of God, no *true* faith in God." We have by nature the fear of the servant (Romans 8:15), an instinctive fear, but not the true fear, the fear of the child of God. So we may also have a false trust in God, or a relying on His kindness which forgets that He cannot be love at the expense of His holiness. What Melancthon had in mind is indicated in the Apology where he points to the German copy of the Confession to show that in choosing the words the thought had not been on any sinful act, but upon the *inability* of fearing and trusting God. We must distinguish between the inability of fearing and trusting God and the *impossibility* and the *actually* not fearing and trusting Him. Dr. Krauth says: "There must be something in a child that can love before it does love, and that something is born with the child." (*Conservative Reformation*, p. 387.)

b. Positive: "and with concupiscence" (*et cum concupiscentia*). What is meant by this term? Not chiefly the desires contrary to the sixth commandment. In this sense the term was used in

74. Dr. S. Sprecher (*Holman Lect.* p. 46) says: "Now a real want consists not simply in the absence of a thing, but in the absence of a thing which should be present. The destitution of the fear of God and of confidence toward Him, is not simply the absence of something but the absence of something which should be present. The Confession consequently speaks not merely negatively, but privatively. The absence of the fear of God and of confidence in Him from an irrational animal is not a real want, because the presence of them is not required by the normal state of its being. But in a rational being it is such, because without the presence of these qualities he is not what he is required, by his entire constitution and all his relations, to be. This destitution is as real a departure from the original and proper state of man, as would be the absence of reason."

Roman Catholic theology. It was called *fomes*, i. e. tinder (German: *Zunder*), by which was meant the inflammable character of our human nature, the fleshly desire, which was said to be neutral (neither good nor evil) but was not liable to become evil. But **Melanchthon** took the position: "Flesh, when contrasted with Spirit, does not mean a part of man, but the whole man consisting of soul and body. . . . Original sin is a living impulse producing fruits, i. e. sins, in all parts of man and at all times of his being, sins many of which the natural man does not regard as sins: covetousness, unholy ambition, hatred, envy, jealousy, pride, lust, wrath, etc. So unfathomable is the corruption that its true character can be learned only through the law of God."⁷⁵ *Dr. Krauth* says: "It (this concupiscence) is that in which all other sins in some sense take their origin. It throws its life into them; without it they might not be; it is not only original, it is also the originating sin, or that sin which gives the origin to all others."⁷⁶ By concupiscence is meant the depravity which is the source of all evil inclinations and acts. As Paul speaks of a "lust" that had "wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." As *Plitt* says of *Luther* that he had begun to learn, "*nicht was Sunden seien, sondern was die Sunde sei*" — not what sins are, but what sin is.⁷⁷ These are *Luther's* own

75. *Loci*, ed. of *Plitt*, pp. 119, 133.

76. *Conserv. Ref.*, p. 390. In *Luthardt, Glaubenslehre*, p. 296, we read: "It is a mistaken exegesis to confine the meaning of flesh (*sarx*) to sensuality, because Scripture numbers sins of an altogether different kind also among the sins of the flesh (Col. 2:18; 2 Cor. 10:2 ff.; Gal. 3:3; 3:19 ff.). The many prominent sins would be left out of consideration: pride, hatred, envy and, above all, the many sins flowing out of selfishness."

77. *Plitt, Einleitung in die Augustana II*, p. 104.

words: This sin is not done like all other sin, but it is, it lives and does all other sin; it is the essential sin which does not sin for an hour or for a certain time, but wherever and as long as the person is, that long is this sin also.⁷⁸ And in the Smalcald Articles, p. 310 he says: "Here (of sin) we must confess, that sin originated from one man Adam, by whose sin all men were made sinners, subject to death and the devil. This is called original or the main sin. The fruits of this sin are afterwards the deeds which are forbidden in the Ten Commandments."

4. THE CHARACTER OF ORIGINAL SIN.

The Confession says: "*quodque hic morbus seu vitium originis vere sit peccatum;*" German: "*dass auch dieselbige angeborne Seuche und Erbsuende wahrhaftiglich Suende sei;*" in our English translation from the Latin: "and that this disease, or vice of origin, is truly sin."

a. This statement is directed against the conception of Original Sin as taught by the Scholastics and prevalent in the Papal Church. Original Sin was to them merely a loss of the Original Righteousness which consisted in the supernatural gifts: holiness, immortality, wisdom, dominion over the earth, etc. (*donum superadditum*). These gifts (in Gen. 1:7 the *zelem*, *similitudo*, likeness) God had added out of pure grace to the real image (*demut, imago*), that man might be enabled to overcome the flesh. According to Bellarmin, namely, there was

78. Church Postill on Luke 2:21. Quenstedt: "Therefore, Paul, Romans 7, calls it sin fourteen times. . . . The apostle names it the law of sin warring against the law of the mind, an evil, a sinning sin."

in man from the beginning, because of his material constitution, a struggle between spirit and flesh. Now this gift was added to what he had as a kind of bridle to restrain the inclination of his flesh. It had the same task which a "governor" or "regulator" has in a machine, viz. to establish the proper relation between body and soul. But this *donum superadditum* was no integral constituent of the Image which consisted merely in immortality of soul, reason and free will, the pure nature (*pura naturalia*). In his fall, therefore, in losing the Original Righteousness, he lost no natural gift; he simply returned to his original state. This loss of Original Righteousness means for the descendants of Adam no real sinful condition, but has merely brought upon them a defect of human nature, a weakness (*languor*) so that it is more difficult now to overcome the inclinations of the flesh, the *concupiscentia*. The natural depravity, or *fomes*, as they called it, is something indifferent, neither good nor bad and, properly speaking, not sin. It only becomes sin if not resisted and when it develops into sinful acts; but if we resist, then we are entitled to the much more praise. These thoughts which have grown in Pelagian soil and were taught by representative men like Thomas Aquinas⁷⁹ and Duns Scotus and many others (Bellarmine, Gabr. Biel, etc.) are symbolized in the Catechismus Romanus I, 2, 15; II, 12, 3.

b. Our Confessors teach that Original Sin, i. e., in its private as well as in its positive sense, is "**truly sin**"; not only called sin, but is sin in the

79. *Summa prima sec. qu.* 82, art. 1-3; qu. 85, art. 1-2.

strictest sense. How can the privative part of what was stated as the contents of Original Sin really be sin? Answer: "By being a violation of the first commandment, which is the sum of all the commandments. Not to be able to fear and love God is of itself want of conformity with God's Law; it is being otherwise than God wants us to be." And regarding the positive part, "concupiscence," it is by no means anything indifferent, a mere *fomes*, an incentive for the better powers in man, but the very thing that is forbidden in the ninth and tenth commandments; it is, as the Apology calls it "enmity against God," an "habitual corruption." According to Luther, in the Smalcald Articles, this corruption is so deep and awful that man can know it only from revelation.

5. THE NATURAL CONSEQUENCES OF ORIGINAL SIN.

The natural consequence is that it "condemns and brings now also eternal death," a translation from the Latin: "*damnans et afferens nunc quoque aeternam mortem*"; German: "*und verdamme . . . unter ewigen Gottes Zorn.*"

a. "**Eternal death,**" the very thing that God threatened should be the result of the fall: "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:7). This means not only temporal death, the fearful separation of body and soul (Ps. 90:7 and 11), but eternal death which "is the eternal death of the soul re-united with the body and separated from God."

b. "**Now also**" (*nunc quoque*). The penalty for the state of depravity was not confined

to the first parents, but it holds for every one of their posterity, because they have actually inherited this condition. The establishment of the covenant of grace per se without regeneration does not release the race from the liability pertaining to Original Sin. Neither are children eo ipso free from this penalty, because they are born in Christendom, or of Christian parents.

6. THE REMEDY OF THE EVIL.

Condemnation and eternal death is actually incurred by all "*who are not born again.*" Latin: "*his, qui non renascantur.*" German: "*alle die so nicht wiederum neu geboren werden.*"

a. Regeneration is necessary. There is no salvation of any human creature without a change from the depraved condition into which he is born. In this doctrine, "all but Pelagians are in unity of faith with our Church. The testimony of the Church through all ages is most explicit on this point: that no unregenerate human being, infant or adult, pagan or nominal Christian, can be saved."⁸⁰ Even those who reject infant Baptism usually have some kind of explanation how children are made acceptable to God without the Sacrament which our Church regards as the ordinary means of regeneration. If they seek for no such explanation then they are outright Pelagians. As to the absolute necessity of regeneration or conversion for every human creature the testimony of Scripture is very clear.

b. The Holy Spirit is the sole author of regeneration. The new birth shall take place

80. *Conserv. Ref.*, p. 420.

"through Baptism and *The Holy Ghost*." Latin: "*per Spiritum Sanctum*." German: "*durch Heiligen Geist*."

We cannot effect the new birth ourselves, out of powers of our own. The adult is as helpless as the infant. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). Regeneration, the internal processes of which are a mystery to us, can be wrought only by the Holy Spirit. "Before the true doctrine of the supreme and sole necessity of the Holy Spirit's work, as the author of regeneration, the great mystery of infant salvation passes away" (Krauth, p. 425)⁸¹

c. Baptism is one of the ordinary means of the new birth: "through Baptism and the Holy Ghost," "*per Baptismum*," "*durch die Taufe*." Is Baptism absolutely necessary? Art. IX says that "it is necessary to salvation." On the point here under consideration read the discussion of that article.

7. THE ERRORISTS REJECTED.

"They condemn the Pelagians and others, who deny that the vice of origin is sin, and who, to obscure the glory of Christ's merit and benefits, argue that man can be justified before God by his own strength and reason."

a. The Pelagians "denied that children are born with sin, that any fault in their nature is

81. The thought that the Holy Ghost is the *sole* author of the new birth to the exclusion of any exaltation of man's free will in spiritual things is the theme of Article XVIII of the Augustana as well as of Article II of the Formula of Concord which might be studied in connection with Art. XI (F. C.) on Predestination.

really sin, that death is the wages of sin, and that a new birth is necessary that they may have eternal life.”⁸² They “deny that the vice of origin is sin.” Latin: “*Qui vitium originis negant esse peccatum.*” German: “*so die Erbsuende nicht fuer Suende haben.*” The fact is that they denied Original Sin altogether, admitting only sins of act. The fundamental idea of the Pelagian system was the denial of the organic connection between the individual sinful acts of men. The individual sins are isolated and crumbled to atoms. They appear like little stones gathered in a heap not producing anything while the Scriptures consider them as poisonous plants with an uncontrollable vegetation and propagation throwing their seed far around. The Pelagians deny the source of sin, the depravity. Concupiscence is to them no sin, but something innocent, a necessary part of man’s original nature. And man is in perfect possession of the freedom necessary to work out his own salvation. It is evident that then the redemption of Christ was not necessary. Pelagian teaching, therefore, aims at “obscuring the glory of Christ’s merit and benefits.” (Latin: “*ut extenuent gloriam meriti et beneficiorum Christi.*” German: “*damit sie die Natur fromm machen durch natuerliche Kraefte, zu Schmach dem Leiden und Verdienst Christi.*”)

b. What are we to understand by the words: “et alios,” by “the Pelagians **and others**”?

(1) There can be no doubt that in the first place the **Semi-Pelagianism** of the Roman Catholic Church was meant (the Pelagianizing teaching of

82. M. Loy, *Augsb. Conf.*, p. 447. Compare Krauth, pp. 446-47, the quotations from the writings of Augustine.

the Scholastics, especially those of the school of Duns Scotus). They also taught that concupiscence as such was no sin and, in connection with it, that man's will was sufficiently free to take the initiative in the process of conversion. Original Sin was to them pre-eminently something negative, the loss of original righteousness (*carētia justitiae originalis*) which indeed causes a certain disturbance in man's powers (*inordinatio in omnibus aliis animae viribus*) and might be called *concupiscentia*, but did not mean a real corruption.⁸³ From the reply in the Confutation we can see that the Papal theologians had felt that they were aimed at. And the Apology explicitly denounces the Scholastic theology as Pelagianizing.

(2) It has been a matter of discussion whether also *Zwingli* was meant as belonging to these "others."⁸⁴ But it can hardly be denied in view of the whole situation. While *Zwingli* signed the articles of the Marburg Colloquy (1529), the fourth of which treats of Original Sin, yet in the Confession which he sent to Charles V at the Diet of Worms he says: "Whether we will, or will not, we are forced to admit that original sin, as it is in the sons of Adam, is not properly sin, . . . for it is not a deed contrary to the law. It is, therefore, properly a disease and a condition." In a letter to Urban Rhegius in Augsburg: "What could be clearer that that original sin is not sin, but a disease?" In his Book on Baptism: "We affirm that original sin is only that disease which we derive

83. Kolde, *Augsb. Konf.*, p. 25.

84. See on this question Dr. Krauth, p. 448; Zoeckler, p. 154; Plitt, p. 129.

by inheritance. Therefore, original sin does not merit condemnation. How can it be that which is disease and contagion merits the name of sin, or is sin in reality?" Dr. Krauth, who considers Zwingli an exceedingly poor theologian, remarks: "His fallacy is the ordinary one, that the character of sin is the deed, not in the essence of moral nature, which originates the deed; that sin cannot *be*, but always must *be done*."⁸⁵

Note: It is of interest to note that these words "et alios" were left out by Melanchthon in the *Varia* of 1540.⁸⁶

Let us close with these words of Prof. Zoeckler: "This doctrine of Original Sin is not a doctrine of minor importance that could easily be omitted from the system of soteriological truth: a one-sided and exaggerated theory, an outgrowth of morbid and narrow conceptions regarding the moral nature and responsibility of men; but it is simply the sum of what the Scriptures teach concerning what we men are and what our relation is to God, the quintessence of the Davidic and Pauline anthropology."⁸⁷ It is a doctrine which even today all true believers of the Gospel must defend against Rationalism, false Humanism, Synergism, false Protestantism, and Modernism.

ARTICLE THREE

Of the Son of God

Also they teach, that the Word, that is, the Son of God, did take man's nature in	Item docent, quod Verbum, hoc est, Filius Dei, assumeret humanam naturam in
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85. *Conserv. Ref.*, p. 449. A comprehensive review of Zwingli's doctrine of Original Sin is given in Plitt II, 129-132. *Comp. Zw. Opp.* 3, 629, 331, 635, 638, 640.

86. See the comment of Zoeckler, p. 154, and Vilmar, *Die Augsb. Conf. erklart*, p. 57, 53 ff.

87. *Augsb. Conf.*, p. 138.

the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, so that there are Two Natures, the divine and the human, inseparably conjoined in one Person, one Christ, true God and true man, who was born of the Virgin Mary, truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, that he might reconcile the Father unto us, and be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but for all actual sins of men. He also descended into hell, and truly rose again the third day; afterward he ascended into Heaven, that he might sit on the right hand of the Father, and forever reign, and have dominion over all creatures, and sanctify them that believe in Him, by sending the Holy Ghost into their hearts, to rule, comfort and quicken them, and to defend them against the devil and the power of sin. The same Christ shall openly come again to judge the quick and the dead, etc., according to the Apostles' Creed.

utero beatæ Mariæ virginis, ut sint duæ naturæ, divina et humana in unitate personæ inseparabiliter coniunctæ, unus Christus, vere Deus et vere homo, natus ex virgine Maria, vere passus, crucifixus, mortuus et sepultus, ut reconciliaret nobis Patrem et hostia esset non tantum pro culpa originis, sed etiam pro omnibus actualibus hominum peccatis. Idem descendit ad inferos et vere resurrexit tertia die, deinde ascendit ad coelos, ut sedeat at dexteram Patris, et perpetuo regnet et dominetur omnibus creaturis, sanctificet credentes in ipsum, misso in corda eorum Spiritu Sancto, qui regat, consoletur ac vivificet eos ac defendat adversus diabolum et vim peccati. Idem Christus palam est rediturus, ut iudicet vivos et mortuos cetera. iuxta Symbolum Apostolorum.

I. THE INCARNATION OF THE SON OF GOD.

"Also they teach that the Word, that is the Son of God, did take man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary."

a) The **pre-existence** of Christ is here hinted at. We are reminded of the Logos in the prologue

to John's Gospel, who "*was*" with God from the beginning and who was God Himself.

b) From which side was **the initiative** in the act of incarnation? We read: "The Word, that is the Son of God, did take man's nature." The Logos, then, was the person-forming subject. This is directed against Ebionitism which started its Christology with the historical *man* Jesus: The man Jesus as growing up in Nazareth was gradually *adopted* as Son of God. We have successors to the Ebionitic error in Dynamistic Monarchianism, in Socinianism and in modern Unitarianism of varying names. Our article teaches not that man became God, but "that the Word, that is the Son of God, did take man's nature."

c) The **Virgin Birth** is insisted upon as a basis upon which to maintain the sinlessness of the Savior.

d) The Logos assumed "**human nature.**" Not a human *person* already existing, else we would have two persons, a divine and a human, contrary to Tim. 2:5; but man's *nature* was assumed, which is common to us all. Christ did not redeem a particular man, but all men as partakers of the nature.

2. TWO NATURES, BUT ONE PERSON.

"So that there are two Natures, the divine and the human, inseparably conjoined in One Person, true God and true man."

a) **The Result** of this act of incarnation (the Logos assuming human nature) is here expressed in the doctrine of the personal union (*unio personalis*). In the language of Hollaz it is "a conjunction of the two natures, divine and human,

subsisting in one hypostasis of the Son of God, producing a mutual and an indissoluble communion of both natures." Therefore it is called the hypostatic (personal) union. (See Schmid, pp. 296, 306.)

b) **For historical orientation** our reference must be twofold:

First, to the confessions rendered at the two Oecumenical Councils held at Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451). **At Ephesus**, Nestorius was tried, who, together with the Antiochian School (Theodor of Mopsuetia preeminently) had laid too much emphasis upon the separateness of the two natures in Christ (Dyophysitism). They taught that the relation between the divine and the human nature in Christ was that of an indwelling. The Logos dwells in the man Jesus as in His temple. The relation of the two was represented as a mere connection. It has been illustrated by speaking of two boards glued together. It was not an essential, but a moral union. Only gradually the divine and the human in Christ grew together to be practically one. Against this Dyophysitism, the Church at Ephesus emphasized the real and actual union of the two natures which took place in the act of incarnation; and that it is a real, personal and inseparable union, not a mere moral union or a mystical union. "The self-consciousness of Christ is never divided. His person consists of such a union of the human and divine natures that the divine nature is the seat of self-consciousness and pervades and animates the human."⁸⁸ **At Chalcedon**, a

88. Schaff, *Creeds* I, 31; 32.

confession was rendered against the teaching of Eutyches of the New Alexandrian School, which was: "Only before the incarnation can we speak of two natures; after the incarnation and *in concreto* we can speak only of one divine-human nature." (Kurtz, Ch. Hist.) Eutyches said: "Christ is *of* two natures, but not *in* two"; going so far as to say that "the body of Christ as the body of God is not of like substance with our own." Against this Monophysitism, the Church at Chalcedon maintains the duality of natures, or the distinction of nature even after the act of incarnation without confusion or conversion, so that the divine will ever remain divine, and the human ever human.

Secondly, we must refer to the doctrinal **difference between Luther and Zwingli**. Luther accepted with his whole heart as Scriptural the confession of the ancient Church. In the person of Christ he emphasized the personal union of the two natures. It is only this doctrine in another form when he taught that each of the natures of Christ stands in the most intimate relation to the other and that His humanity participates in the attributes of His divinity (the *genus majestaticum* in the *communicatio idiomatum* of the Formula of Concord). Zwingli in his rationalistic way of thought viewed each nature apart from the other, so that there can be no actual and real union of the divine with the human. He thought that Luther's position involved concessions to Docetism. It may be admitted that some of Luther's followers, Brenz for instance, have laid themselves open to this charge. The Christology of the Formula of Concord

(Art. VIII) has guarded itself carefully against this danger in the teaching of Cyril of Alexandria.

Note: The occasion for discussing this problem was the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper, which was rejected by Zwingli. Yet Luther's Christology was not an invention for the purpose of simply furnishing a support for the doctrine of the Real Presence, as Schaff and many others have viewed it; (Creeds of Christendom, I, 288.); no, what Luther wanted to establish with his strong emphasis upon the personal union was nothing less than the full value of the atonement wrought by Christ, the God-man. If the humanity of Christ is so separated from His divinity that there is no real unity and communion, no communication of the divine attributes to the humanity, then there is no real validity in the sufferings of Christ. Luther: "If the devil should persuade me that in Christ a mere man was crucified and died for me, then I would be lost; but if I can attach to it the importance that Christ died for me as real God and man then such doctrine will outweigh and destroy sin, death, hell, and all misery." Luther believed and taught from Scripture that Christ, after His exaltation to the Right Hand of God is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent also with regard to His humanity. Zwingli denied this. He so denied the participation of the one nature in the life and experiences of the other that the reality of the personal union was lost. Wherever in the Scriptures something human is ascribed to Christ's divine person, or something divine to His humanity, there he explained it away by his so-called "alloeosis," a *phrasis loquendi* which here means that while the divine nature is mentioned the human is meant and vice versa. He says that the Scriptures in those cases predicate in a merely rhetorical way something of one nature, which, strictly speaking, can be said only of the other. (Read in Formula of Concord, Art. VIII, 39.) It was with reference to this theory of Zwingli that Luther declared: "Beware, beware, I tell you, of the alloeosis, it is a mask of the devil! For in the end it constructs a Christ, after which I would not like to be a Christian; a Christ whose sufferings and life do not mean more than that of any ordinary saint." (Formula of Concord, Art. VIII, 40.)

3. THE STATES OF CHRIST.

a) **The state of humiliation** is described with the following words of our article:

“Who was born of the Virgin Mary, truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried.”

Keeping in mind the emphasis upon the personal union the thought is here that Christ as the God-man suffered this. Can God suffer? Not in His Godhead (*in Deum non cadit mutatio*), but Christ suffered in His human nature. The two natures, while each of them was distinct, constituted but one personal life. The divine nature was the seat of His self-consciousness. So the divinity took part in the suffering of the human nature. The suffering of the God-man was not a Gnostic delusion. Therefore our article says: “*truly* suffered.” In the German text we read also: “*wahrhaftig* geboren.”

b) **The state of exaltation** begins with the words: “He also” (*idem*). We note the interest of this whole article in emphasizing the personal union of the two natures in Christ. The statements which in the following are to be made of the exaltation have all the same subject. It was the Logos who had incarnated Himself into human nature that suffered the humiliation and that afterwards was exalted.

“He also descended into hell.”

The Reformed Confessions **count the descent** as the last stage in Christ’s humiliation; to the Lutherans it is the first stage in His exaltation.

The Formula of Concord has a special article on this subject (Art. IX). It is directed against those who taught that Christ's descent, being a part of His humiliation, simply meant the intense sufferings of His soul on the cross; or that while His body was lying in the grave His soul was suffering in hell for the purpose of completing the work of atonement. Over against these views the F. C. says: "We simply believe that the entire person, God and man, *after the burial*, descended into hell, *conquered the devil*, destroyed the power of hell, and took from the devil all his might."

"And truly rose again the third day."

Note here again the word "truly" (Latin: *vere*; German: *wahrhaftig*). The reality of Christ's resurrection is to be emphasized. The "He also" (at the beginning of the sentence), reminding us of the whole God-man, has an emphasis upon the truth that *Christ's body was included in the resurrection* (Luke 24:39; John 20:27; Luke 24:41-43; John 21:12-15). The "truly rose again" excludes all spiritualism as to the resurrection of Christ.

"Afterward He ascended into heaven, that He might sit on the right hand of the Father, and forever reign," etc.

What is understood by the "**right hand** of the Father"? In connection with Luther's doctrine of the Ubiquity this question became a much discussed problem between the Lutherans and the Reformed. Over against Zwingli's argument that Christ's body, being confined locally at the "right hand of God," could not be present in the Supper, Luther emphasized in his "Grosses Bekenntnis vom Abend-

mahl," 1528, that the right hand of God "is no fixed place in heaven . . ., but is nothing else than *the almighty power of God* which fills heaven and earth." This has become a teaching of the Lutheran Church. Gerhard says: "The right hand of God is not a bodily, circumscribed, limited, definite place, but it is the infinite power of God and His most efficacious majesty in heaven and earth; it is that most efficacious dominion by which God preserves and governs all things."⁸⁹

"That He might sit on the right hand of the Father, and forever reign, and have dominion over all creatures, and sanctify them that believe in Him, by sending the Holy Ghost into their hearts, to rule, comfort and quicken them, and to defend them against the devil and the power of sin."

It is the evident intention to emphasize that Christ is a **living Savior**. He is not like Mohammed who invented a religion and then passed away without being more to his followers than a person that had once lived; but He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven from where He continues to save His believers.

"The same Christ shall openly come again to judge the quick and the dead, etc., according to the Apostles' Creed."

Christ's return to judgment is treated in a separate article (XVII); the special feature of this statement, therefore, is expressed by the words: "the same Christ" (*idem Christus*. German: *derselbige Herr Christus*). The point to be made is this: The Christ who shall openly come again for

89. Cf. C. P. Krauth, *Conservative Reformation*, p. 131: Christ's presence in the Supper is not a local, but a sacramental presence. See F. C., Art. VII.

judgment is "the same" of whom we heard before, the Logos who became incarnated, the one Christ, God and man in one person — He who became our Savior, mediating between the Father and man for our salvation. There is comfort for us in knowing that the judge at the end of this world will be our own Savior!

4. CHRIST'S SAVIORSHIP.

Between the words on the state of humiliation and those on the exaltation there was a statement which we passed by for the sake of logical treatment. We shall discuss that statement in the following two sections:

a) **The doctrine of vicarious atonement is plainly taught in this article.** Christ, the Son of God, became incarnate in order

"that He might reconcile the Father unto us, and be a sacrifice" (*ut reconciliaret nobis Patrem et hostia esset*).

According to these words, it is not man who has to be reconciled to God so that he might give up his enmity (ἔχθρα) against God, his distrust to God (as was first taught by Abelard, and later more elaborately by Socinianism, and in our day by Ritschl and his followers) — no, God was to be reconciled. To make sure that this is the meaning of these words of the Latin, we only need to refer to the German text which speaks of God's wrath, "Gottes Zorn" to be appeased, "versöhnet." Anselm's theory in all its details was too juridic. This can be seen in the system of satisfactions in the Roman Catholic Church. His theory was also one-sided in that it spoke of Christ's active obedience only. Our article

has also the passive obedience: "be a sacrifice" (German: *dass er ein Opfer waere.*")

b. Christ made satisfaction for all sin, "not only for original guilt, but for all actual sins of men" (*non tantem pro culpa originis, sed etiam pro omnibus actualibus hominum peccatis*); German: *Nicht allein fuer die Erbsuende, sondern auch fuer alle anderen Suenden.* It was **taught in the Roman Catholic Church** that Christ had wrought His work of satisfaction for original sin only, but not for the sins committed daily; for these it was necessary for man to atone by special efforts of his own and by the priest's unbloody repetition of the bloody sacrifice of Christ in the Mass. Against this semi-Pelagian doctrine, invented as a support of the hierarchical system, the sentence of our article was directed.

ARTICLE FOUR

Of Justification

Also they teach, that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by His death, hath made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in his sight. Rom. 3 and 4.

Item docent, quod homines non possint iustificari coram Deo propriis viribus, meritis aut operibus, sed gratis iustificentur propter Christum per fidem, quum credunt se in gratiam recipi et peccata remitti propter Christum, qui sua morte pro nostris peccatis satisfecit. Hanc fidem imputat Deus pro iustitia coram ipso, Rom. 3 et 4.

The Connection With the Previous Articles.—It may seem illogical that after the doctrine of salvation through the Son of God at once the doctrine of justification is dis-

cussed. One would expect that the A. C. would now show how man is made to realize his miserable condition and how he is brought to embrace salvation offered in Christ. Then the doctrine of justification would follow.—It must be remembered that the development of Lutheran theology in 1530 was in its infancy and that the terminology had not yet been fully developed. If we here study the explanation of the article as offered in the Apology we will find that at that time “conversion” and “justification” were still discussed under the term justification. (Compare also Luther’s explanation of Galatians). “In the first place we must declare how faith is obtained. Afterward we will show both that it justifies and how this ought to be understood.” (Apol. 91, 61). Then follows a description of conversion. “For concerning the conversion of the wicked, or concerning the mode of regeneration, what can be said that is more simple and more clear?” (65). “Und nachdem das Wort auf zweierlei Weise gebraucht wird, naemlich fuer bekehrt werden oder neugeboren, item fuer gerecht geschaetzt werden etc.” (72). Hence we must here also discuss both doctrines.

This article represents **the center of all doctrines** dealt with in the Confession. In an exclusively historical treatment of the contents of the Augustana, as had been presented us by G. Plitt in his “*Entstehungsgeschichte des Evangelischen Lehrbegriffes bis zum Augsburger Bekenntnisse*,”⁹⁰ this fourth article of Justification would be the first to come under discussion. The doctrinal system of the Lutheran Church can be appreciated only from the soteriological point of view. The **leading question for Luther** was not: Who is God and what do we know of Him? but: How can I come to God and be assured that He is my Father? All other questions should cluster about and receive their light

90. Second part of his “*Einleitung in die Augustana*,” Erlangen, 1868.

from this one fundamental article of Justification of the sinner before God. *Father Aegidius*, the spiritual counsellor of Emperor Charles V, had caught the real essence of the Confession, as publicly read in Augsburg, when he said to Melancthon with special reference to its doctrine of justification: "You have a theology which can be appreciated only if one prays much." How *Luther himself* valued this article can be seen from the following words found in the Smalcald Articles (Part II, Art. 1): "Of this article nothing can be yielded or surrendered, even though heaven and earth and all things should sink to ruin. . . . And upon this article all things depend, which, against the Pope, the devil and the whole world, we teach and practice. Therefore we must be sure concerning this doctrine and not doubt; for otherwise all is lost, and the pope and devil and all things against us gain the victory and suit." (B. of C., p. 312). And in the Formula of Concord we find these words: "This article concerning Justification by Faith (as the Apology says) is the chief in the entire Christian doctrine, without which no poor conscience has any firm consolation, or can know aright the riches of the grace of Christ, as Dr. Luther also has written: 'If only this article remain in view pure, the Christian Church also remains pure, and is harmonious and without all sects; but if it does not remain pure, it is not possible to resist any error or fanatical spirit.'" (B. of C., p. 571). No one can read even the second part of the Augsburg Confession dealing with the abuses without being impressed with the fact that the leading principle in every direction was to reform whatever tended to

obscure the precious doctrine of justification by faith.

This fourth article is very brief, but to guard against misconstructions of this article, as well as the sixth on New Obedience, Melancthon added Article XX on Faith and Good Works, and the Apology has lengthy expositions on this subject. It defends and interprets Art. IV, V, VI, and XX as a unit. These must be **studied together** with a careful observation of the essential discriminations made by our Reformers in re-establishing the doctrine of the Scriptures regarding Justification and Sanctification and the relation of both. It must never be forgotten that the error of **confounding Justification and Sanctification** is not confined to the Roman Catholic Church, but in grosser or sublimer forms ever has been maintained by such as claimed to be Protestants. We mention Schwenkfeld, Osiander, Nitzsch, Mueller, Beck, and the pietistic, mystical and rationalistic tendencies in general. The Formula of Concord also, in Article III ("Of the Righteousness of Faith before God") and Article IV ("Of Good Works"), has valuable contributions on the subject. And even the following articles, V "Of Law and Gospel" and VI of "The Third Use of the Law," can be studied with profit in this connection.

But now to our article under discussion. It contains a *negative* part which declares how men cannot be justified before God, and a *positive* part setting forth how this justification takes place.

A brief analysis of the text is highly instructive:

1. Justification is *not*
 - by man's own **strength** (against synergism, Pelagianism)
 - by man's own **merits** (against meritum congrui et condigni)
 - by man's own **works** (against legalism, self-chosen piety)
2. Man is justified **freely** (grace the eternal source of the whole work of salvation: God wants to justify all men)

for **Christ's** sake (cf. Art III: on account of the atonement God *can* now justify men, since the debt has been paid.

through **faith** (the acceptance of Christ's work offered to man through the means of grace: God does justify the sinner who accepts his eternal love in Christ).

3. Justifying Faith (the personal acceptance of Christ as the personal Savior).

I. RENUNCIATION OF THE ERROR.

"Also they teach, that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits or works." This had reference to the false teaching of the Roman Church, the teaching that justification is a gradual process of growth in righteousness and dependent upon the efforts of man. This error which obscured the promises of the Gospel and thus left the troubled sinner without consolation was of long growth.

1. The History of the Roman Error in the Church.

a. To trace it back to its first source we must begin with the *natural man* and his conception of the way to salvation. The doctrine of justification by grace through faith is one of pure revelation. Human reason outside of revelation has always thought and will always think of salvation as something to be acquired by man's "own strength, merits or works." It is this that Melanchthon has in mind when he in the Apology protests against confounding Christ and the Gospel with "the ethics of Aristotle." "We see books extant," says Melanchthon, "in which certain sayings of Christ are compared with the sayings of Socrates, Zeno and others, as though

Christ had come for the purpose of delivering certain laws, through which we might merit the remission of sins, as though we did not receive this gratuitously, because of His merits" (B. of C., p. 86, 15). Luther used to say: "Nobody will become a theologian except he undertakes it without Aristotle." All human philosophy, as untouched by the renewing powers of God's spirit, will always believe as did the Roman Church at the time when our Reformers rose that men can "be justified before God by their own strength, merits or works." It is the philosophy of our age, — moralism.

b. One of the most **remarkable** things to be observed in the history of the Church is, that *the Pauline doctrine of justification by grace through faith was lost sight of almost immediately after the death of the Apostles*. As if this doctrine was too great and too sublime to be kept in clear vision even by those who with so much earnestness desired to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. To offer a guide for this observation we call attention to a paragraph in the Church History of Kurtz treating of "the theology of the Post-Apostolic Age." He says: "Among the Church Fathers of this age we find an unconscious deterioration of the original doctrine of Paul revealing itself as a smoothing down and belittling or as an ignoring of the genuine Paulinism. . . . They fail to appreciate the pedagogical significance of the Mosaic law (Gal. 3:24)

. . . Even the Gospel itself is regarded as a new and higher law . . . and hence the task of the Son of God is preeminently conceived as that of a divine teacher and lawgiver. In this way there was impressed upon the Old Catholic Church as it

grew up out of Pauline Gentile Christianity a legalistic moral tendency that was quite foreign to the original Paulinism, and the righteousness of faith taught by the Apostle when represented as obedience to the 'new law' passed over again unobserved into a righteousness of works."⁹¹

c. Even Augustine, much as he has contributed towards a more Scriptural appreciation of sin and grace, *failed to take justification to be a forensic act of God* as clearly taught by Paul (Rom. 3:20; Gal. 3:11), but he took this term to mean something subjective, constituting men internally and essentially righteous. He said that God justified man not only (*non solum*) by forgiving his sins, but by more and more infusing the divine righteousness into his life.⁹² He confuses what must be distinguished dogmatically as Conversion, Justification, and Sanctification. From this time on we can observe the fatal confounding of Conversion and Justification with Sanctification in the Church.

d. The scholastics of the medieval age built upon Augustine — and yet developed the doctrine in the direction of merits on man's part. Contrary to Augustine, *Thomas Aquinas* taught that for receiving justifying grace a certain preparation on the part of man was necessary. This was later sanctioned by the *Council of Trent* when it decreed that there should be in man "the voluntary reception of grace and divine gifts." The definition

91. Kurtz, (Engl. ed. 1888.) § 30, sec. 2.

92. For a closer study of the position of Augustine in this point compare R. Seeberg, second (German) edition of his *History of Doctrines* in four volumes, vol. I, pp. 492-93; also Loofs in *Realencyclopaedie*, vol. II, p. 280, lines 50-60; Meusel, *Kirchl. Handlexikon*, vol. I, 251; Plitt *ut supra* 18-23; Valentine in *Holman Lectures*, first series, p. 109.

finally adopted at the Council of Trent was this: "Justification is not remission of sins merely (*non est sola peccatorum remissio*), but also sanctification and the renewal of the inner man by the voluntary reception of grace and divine gifts, so that he who was unrighteous is made righteous, and the enemy becomes a friend and an heir according to the hope of eternal life."⁹³

2. What was the Religious Interest of our Reformers in rejecting this Doctrine?

a. *With this doctrine it would be impossible to exclude, as Scripture does, the merits of man from that by which he is actually saved.* Says **Paul**: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not by works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:8-9.) And again: "If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace." (Rom. 11:6.) And again Paul says: "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 3:24.) There is no way of getting around these statements of Scripture which could be multiplied indefinitely.

"Neither as supplementary to the work of Christ, nor in any combination with it, do the Scriptures tolerate a notion of human merit in the foundation of the sinner's Justification." This was felt by the teachers of the medieval age, and therefore we see them laboring to explain away the merit from at least a part of the work demanded of man in the process of his justification. The **artificial distinction** between a *meritum de congruo* and a *meritum de condigno*

93. *Con. Trid. Sess. 6, cap. 7.*

was invented.⁹⁴ They teach that we can claim for man not more than a *meritum de congruo*, it is meet and fitting that God should reward the efforts of man, because without such work of self-preparation Justification could not follow; yet it is no real merit, because with it man cannot earn his justification in the sense that he would have the right to demand it. But after the infusion of grace has begun we can speak of a *meritum de condigno*, a merit of worthiness, because the work following grace deserves everlasting life of due debt and worthiness. This whole distinction is an **invention of the human mind**, is unscriptural. Even our good works in the life of sanctification, which we say must of necessity follow the act of Justification, are in no sense meritorious, as Jesus says: "When ye have done all these things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." (Luke 17:10).

b. The Roman doctrine was to be rejected *because of the uncertainty in which it leaves the penitent sinner regarding his salvation*. If Justification is not an objective act of God, an instantaneous act declaring the sinner righteous, but if it is made to consist in a subjective holiness which is completed in degrees, then there can be no certain assurance of adoption by God. Yet Paul speaks clearly of such assurance: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:1.)

Augustine, who emphasized justification as a growth in holiness and believing, as we do, that the highest ideal in a sanctified life can never be reached in this body of sin, taught consistently that man could never be absolutely sure of his salvation. Also *Thomas Aquinas* taught that an actual certainty of salvation is not attainable, and that "the possession of grace can only be inferred *conjecturaliter* from good

94. By Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa*, see *Quaest.* 114, art 6. This was generally adopted. Comp. Seeberg, *Hist. of Doc.* II, p. 123. Plitt II, 24.

works." *Summa, quest.* 112, a. 5. No wonder that *Luther* could find no rest for his troubled soul until he began to understand the doctrine that justification is by grace alone, through faith. This brought assurance and peace.

The entire Roman Catholic system is a **"theology of doubt."** *Adam Moehler*, a celebrated writer of the Catholic Church and a pious man, once said that he always felt uneasy when coming in touch with an individual who claimed that he, by believing in Christ, had the assurance of the forgiveness of his sins. The spiritual independency of such a man from the Church as the proper institution to offer the guarantee, appears to him as something "demoniacal."

c. The Roman doctrine was also to be rejected because it is the **fruitful source of many corrupting errors**: "The *merit of work and ascetic self-culture* became the very soul of the monastic seclusions, pilgrimages, penances, and the circle of perverted and perverting will-worship, which at once deformed the Christian life and disgraced the Church of that day." (Valentine.) Here the unscriptural doctrine of the *consilia evangelica* has its root, the doctrine namely that man may do something in excess of what God has the right to demand of him and thus merit special grace, yea, merit grace which is stored up in a "*treasure of super-abundant works*" and applied for the benefits of others. This again was the foundation on which the monstrous *system of indulgences* was erected. So the pernicious influence of the Roman doctrine of justification could be traced in every direction.

II. STATEMENT OF THE TRUE DOCTRINE.

1. In the **Technical Language** systematic theology enumerates **four "causes" of Justification**: (1) God's grace and mercy as the *efficient* cause; (2) the merits of Christ as the *meritorious* cause; (3) the means of grace as the *mediating cause on the part of God*, or the hand with which He gives; (4) *faith as the instrumental cause on the part of man*, or the hand with which he receives.⁹⁵ The third of these causes is not mentioned in this article, but is thoroughly treated in other articles (mentioned as such in Art. V and IX, X, XIII). Of the fourth "cause" we shall treat below, under 4.

2. **The Source of Justification.** Text: "freely justified."

It is the **grace** (χάρις) of God. Nobody has a right to demand the forgiveness of his sins. "Being justified *freely* by his grace" (Rom. 3:24). In Romans 5:15 it is called "the free gift" (χάρισμα), and a "gift by grace" (δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι). It was a settled matter with our Reformers that Justification which is identical with the forgiveness of sins (see under II, 3, below) has its source exclusively in the grace of God, in His eternal compassion with the sinner.

In this paragraph we are discussing *grace as the efficient cause (causa efficiens)*, as that which is prompting God, by which He is moved to justify man in forgiving his sins. The **sense of this term "grace"** as used in this connection must be clearly

95. Here special care has to be used that we do not lose ourselves into Synergism. It may be best to avoid the use of 4 altogether.

distinguished. The Papists and others who cannot appreciate justification as a judicial, forensic act (cf. II, 3, below) also use the word "grace," but they attach with it a meaning which Scripture never gives to it in connection with the idea of justification. They take "grace" to mean a quality in us,⁹⁶ a gift, an ability, injected by God in man to love Him and to do all kinds of good works (B. of C., p. 86, 117). There are passages of Scripture where "grace" is to be taken in that sense, but here it can not be so taken. Here it means as Melanchthon rightly interprets it: "*favor*." Grace is love, but that love which is bestowed upon one who has nothing on his own account. It is the love of God towards the sinner (Rom. 4, 7). God embraces us lost and condemned creatures with love and tender mercy. Praise to God that it is "grace" *in this sense*, which is the efficient cause of our justification! If justification was depending in any way upon any work of anything on our part, or if grace was, as Melanchthon in the Apology quotes his opponents to believe, "a habit, inclining us the more readily to love God," then we could never know what degree of such love was required to secure justification and we could never be certain of having been justified. With the Scripture we do not build upon graces and habits in ourselves, but upon the inexhaustible mercy and grace of God, whose eternal mercy and grace found a way to save us sinners.

3. The Ground of Justification, or the meritorious cause (*causa meritoria*). We refer to the

96. *Qualitatem aliquam in nobis*", Melanchthon in his *Loci De Gratia*.

text in our article: "for Christ's sake" (*propter Christum*). This expression occurs twice in German: "*dass Christus fuer uns gelitten hat.*" Again: "who, by his death, has made satisfaction for our sins." Among many passages of Scripture for these statements we quote Rom. 3:24-25: "Justified freely by the grace of God, *through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.*"

a. *Active and passive obedience.* The **passive obedience** of Christ only is mentioned in the above quotations from our article, because it presents the most central conception of the atonement. By His vicarious sufferings culminating in His death and the yielding up of His spirit He atoned for their sins in their stead. The **active obedience**, (Christ's perfect fulfillment of the Law as of meritorious importance for us), was not mentioned in the Augsburg Confession, because this doctrine, in the form in which we now have it in our Catechisms and works on Dogmatics, was emphasized only in later time. True, Luther already taught it, as can be seen from his sermons in the *Kirchenpostille* (Erl. Ed. VII, 282), but the Formula of Concord on account of Osiander's error was the first of our Confessions to emphasize it (Art. III): "Therefore, His obedience, not only in suffering and dying, but also that He in our stead was voluntarily subject to the law, and fulfilled it by His obedience, is imputed to us for righteousness, so that, on account of this complete obedience, which by deed and suffering, in life and in death, He rendered His heavenly Father for us, God for-

gives our sins, regards us godly and righteous, and eternally saves us" (B. of C., 572).⁹⁷

b. Christ is our justification according to both of His natures. This is *not stated explicitly* in our article which simply says: "for Christ's sake" (*propter Christum*). However, it ought to be regarded as *included*, because Christ as God-man has a divine and a human nature and both participated in the obedience by which our redemption was wrought.

It was the task of the **Formula of Concord** in defending this doctrine, on account of the errors of that time, to enter into details on this subject. *Osiander* had taught that we are justified by Christ's righteousness according to His divine nature alone, while by another theologian (*Stancar*) the view was represented that by His human nature alone Christ is our righteousness.

Both of these views were wrong. The **position of Osiander is of special interest** and gave occasion for a violent controversy between himself and *Flacius*. *Osiander* taught that "the indwelling of the divine nature of Christ, with which at the same time the Triune God dwells in us, is our righteousness before God."⁹⁸ "When we are united with Christ by faith, we are 'overwhelmed and filled' with divine righteousness. And although sin indeed still clings to us, yet it is only as an impure drop compared with the whole pure ocean, and, on account of Christ's righteousness which is within us, God will not regard it" (*ibidem*). The error of *Osiander*

97. Formula of Concord, Sol. Decl., Art. III, 15.

98. Seeberg, *Hist. of Doctr.* II, 371.

99. *Holman Lect.*, p. 123.

consisted in this that he, as Dr. Valentine so lucidly states, "confounded the true, essential, unchangeable righteousness of the Son of God, in His true natural and essential divinity, with that vicarious work which forms the meritorious righteousness provided in his obedience and death, and imputed to the sinner." According to the Scriptures we are not justified because Christ as the second person of Trinity is absolutely sinless and holy in His essence and being, but because He, the Son of God, took upon Himself our sins and suffered the punishment which otherwise we must have suffered. **Stancar's view** that Christ is our righteousness according to His human nature alone left out of consideration that the participation of the divine nature in offering us the basis for our Justification is necessary to secure the efficacy, value, and perfection of His redeeming work. The Formula of Concord treats of this in Chapter III, "The Righteousness of Faith before God."

The Doctrine of Conversion and Justification. Since the word "justification" was intended to express both conversion (see *supra*) and imputation the statements must be understood in both ways, to-wit: Man is not converted by his own strength, merits or works, but freely, for Christ's sake through faith. According to the Roman doctrine God approaches man in order to save him; man has the power to do something (*quod in se est*); if he uses his own remnant of strength and at least permits God to work, if he only uses the outward means, he is better than others who do the opposite and has a merit in a certain sense (*meritum de congruo*). Though this is no real merit

God rewards it by bestowing some "grace" upon man. This means: God infuses in some way some divine power into his heart. Now man with his own innate powers can cooperate with this power, and insofar as his action is the result of the divine strength used, it is really good before God (*meritum condigni*) and God must reward it. He does so by endowing man with more power. And in this way the process goes on. Gradually and slowly man is thus made more and more perfect and earns salvation by a slow process. And this process of the moral change is called "justification" which then is brought about by man's own strength, merits and works.

The Lutheran doctrine is that man, being dead in sins, can contribute not the least. On the contrary, as far as he is concerned, he will by his nature only resist (See Art. II of F. C.) God is moved by his grace to help man in his lost and condemned condition. Already in eternity He planned not only the salvation of mankind in general, but of each and every individual. His love towards the sinner (grace) is universal. Christ has atoned the Father (Art. III) and appeased the wrath of God. But before God can offer and bestow the grace to sinful man, he must see his true condition and realize that he is lost and condemned. For this reason the Law is preached to him. Luther compares the Law with a thunderbolt that frightens man. He sees only the wrath of God and no escape from it. Then God comes to him in the blessed message of the Gospel of Jesus, who took upon Himself the sins of every man and is the Savior of even such a sinner as this individual. There is no condition, but pardon

is offered as a free gift. Not because the sinner is in some measure good or better in some way than others, or for anything in man, but because God is gracious and merciful Christ offers Himself as the gift. Man must accept this free gift. And even this act of receiving and accepting, this taking over is attributed by the Scriptures to God as the author of everything that is good. With this act of faith (no matter whether a mere spark of faint hope or heroic grasping) man has been changed morally. Conversion has taken place in man. And now an action takes place outside of man in God, and this is what is called by the Scriptures "Justification."

4. **The true meaning of Justification.** See Art. III in F. C. — It is described as a judicial act, an act of declaration (*justum pronunciare, declarare*), not as the Roman Church takes it to be: an act of making man righteous, qualitatively (*justum reddere, infusio justitiae habitualis seu sanctitatis inhaerentis*). It is not a *subjective process* in man, but an *objective act* of God declaring the sinner just. God regards the sinner just notwithstanding the fact that he is actually sinful. This judicial meaning of Justification is **fully substantiated** by an exegetical investigation of the respective terms employed in the Old as well as in the New Testament. The Hebrew *hizdick* and the Greek δικαιούν are to be taken in the declarative sense whenever they have reference to the Justification of the sinner before God. Our article refers to the entire argument of the third and fourth chapters of Paul to the Romans. *A negative and a positive side are to be distinguished.*

a. Negative: a non-imputation or forgiveness of sins. See the text in our article: "*et peccata remitti*" ("that their sins are forgiven"); German "*dass wir Vergebung der Suenden bekommen*," "*dass uns um seinetwillen die Suende vergeben*." The forgiveness of sins is always mentioned together with justification in our Confessions. And this is done on the basis of the Scriptures. Rom. 4:7-8, quoting the words of David: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."

b. Positive: in our text the word "justified" (*justificetur*); German: "Gerechtigkeit fuer Gott," "fuer Gott gerechtwerden"; and the closing phrase: "This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight." There are two thoughts contained in these quotations expressing the positive side of justification:

(1) The relation between justification and the forgiveness of sins. It is not merely pardon that the sinner needs. "Being forgiven, he is not left in the condition of a criminal merely released from punishment. . . . Divested alike of his own sins and righteousness, he is not to be held henceforth as miserable and poor and naked, but as clothed in spotless garments and made right indeed." Pardon takes away from the sinner what he has, but justification gives him what he has not — the righteousness of Christ.

(2) The other thought to which our attention is called is the idea of imputation: "This faith God *imputes* for righteousness in His sight." Sometimes it is the "righteousness of Christ" and at

other times it is our "faith" that is said to be imputed to us, but that involves no contradiction. For "faith" is here meant only as apprehending and appropriating the "righteousness of Christ." The phrase chosen in our article has special reference to Rom. 4:3-6: "For what says Scripture? Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness. . . . But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." Our article puts the emphasis upon the idea of imputation. If we believe on Christ then His righteousness is *imputed* to us. We are regarded righteous notwithstanding our actual sinfulness. **The Roman Church and those of similar position** in this question cannot appreciate such an "imputed righteousness. They think that such doctrine may satisfy the head, but cannot satisfy the heart. Adam Moehler says: "The Protestant theory of justification expects of God to regard an Ethiopian as white." But this is not the case, for in our doctrine of justification we do not consider the sinner as he is in himself, but we consider him in his relation to and in his union with Christ.

It is easy to understand the relation of justification and imputation: Whenever the context speaks of man as he stands before God's eyes by himself his sins stand out prominently. The gracious act of God towards this sinner is then described by saying that He does not hold him accountable for his sins, but remits, forgives, cancels them,

so that they shall not be thought of any more. Whenever the context speaks of the fact that we must be righteous and holy in order to appear before God, then the gracious act of God is compared with the act of clothing the guest in the royal garment. And Christ's righteousness is the garment in which we can fearlessly appear before the face of the holy God. The righteousness of Christ is attributed to us.

The F. C. adds another comparison from the Scriptures. By nature all men are children of wrath, children of the world. The action of God towards the prodigal son that returns to Him with contrition and hope (faith) is that He receives him as His son, adopts him as His child and by this act of adoption establishes a state that begins with the first moment of faith and is to last into all eternity. These three terms: forgiveness of sins, imputation of Christ's righteousness and adoption unto childhood do not express successive actions, but are three terms for one and the same act of God that takes place where the Holy Spirit has wrought the acceptance of God's grace or faith. This leads us to a closer study of

5. Faith as the Subjective Means of Justification. Text: "through faith" (*per fidem*); German: "*durch den Glauben*." It is the *instrumental or apprehending cause* of Justification.

a. What kind of faith is meant? Article XX says: "Faith doth not only signify a knowledge of the history, which may be in the wicked, and in the devil," though such knowledge (*notitia*) is the basis of faith. No, the faith which in our fourth article is meant as the instrumental cause of justi-

fication (*per fidem*), as the middle cause on man's part, is, as Article XX says: "a faith which believeth, not only the history, but also the effect of the history, to-wit, the article of the remission of sins; namely, that by Christ we have grace, righteousness and remission of sins." It means "a trust, which doth comfort and lift up disquieted minds." Even our brief fourth article offers a fitting description of what justifying faith is: "when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake."¹⁰⁰

b. Such faith in itself is a living and transforming one. That is the theme of the last part of Article XX. Good works must follow. The *Apology* says: "We speak of faith as being not an idle fancy, but a new light, life, and power in the heart, that renews the heart and disposition, transforms man into a new creature."

c. But while this belongs to the nature of faith, **it is not the sanctifying character of faith that justifies us.** We must guard against making faith a meritorious work. Our article simply says: *per fidem, through faith*; not *propter fidem, for the sake of faith*. We must never forget these words of our article: "freely justified for Christ's sake through faith" (*propter Christum, per fidem*).

d. If we are sure to understand by "faith" nothing more than the receiving organ, a hand stretched out to God in confidence that He, for Christ's sake, will fill it with the gift of grace, then we do not object to our Reformers who, by

100. We keep in mind that faith is the gift of God and that therefore we cannot speak of faith as a *cause* for justification in the same sense as we speak of Christ as the meritorious cause.

employing the *exclusive particles* and especially the particle "*alone*" (*allein durch den Glauben*), jealously guarded the purity of the relation of faith to justification. In Romans 3:28, Paul says: "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law." Luther, in his translation of the Bible into German, took the liberty to say "by faith *alone*," which he justified by the clear meaning of this passage. Bengel, in his *Gnomon*, defends it by a simple demonstration of arithmetic. He says: Two things are here considered:

faith and works	2
works are excluded	1
	<hr/>
faith only remains	1

With fine sarcasm against the critics of Luther he adds: Two, take away one leaves one.

It is evident that Article IV is the central article of all the rest of the Confession. The larger space which we have devoted to it will enable us to be very brief in Article VI on the New Obedience, and particularly in Article XX (Faith and Good Works) which now needs to be presented in outline only.

ARTICLE FIVE

How Justifying Faith is Obtained

(Of the Office of the Ministry.)

That we may obtain this faith, the Office of Teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments as through instruments, the Holy Ghost

Ut hanc fidem consequamur, institutum est ministerium docendi evangelii et porrigendi sacramenta. Nam per verbum et sacramenta tamquam per instrumenta donatur Spiritus Sanctus,

is given, who worketh faith where and when it pleaseth God in them that hear the Gospel, to-wit, that God, not for our own merits, but for Christ's sake, justified those who believe that they are received into favor for Christ's sake.

They condemn the Anabaptists and others, who think that the Holy Ghost cometh to men without the external Word, through their own preparations and works.

qui fidem efficit, ubi et quando visum est Deo, in iis, qui audiunt evangelium, scilicet quod Deus non propter nostra merita, sed propter Christum iustificet hos, qui credunt se propter Christum in gratiam recipi.

Damnant Anabaptistas et alios, qui sentiunt Spiritum Sanctum contingere sine Verbo externo hominibus per ipsorum praeparationes et opera.

1. The Leading Thought through this Article is not indicated by the customary superscription: "*Of the Office of the Ministry.*" The ministry is here spoken of only in an incidental way. The real theme under discussion in this article is the question, *how justifying faith is wrought by God*. In Article IV we learned that justification takes place "through faith." Now we will naturally ask how this faith is produced. The answer is: Through the means of grace. These, of course, must be administered, and for this purpose God has instituted the ministry as the office charged with their administration. On the ministry *per se*, that is, on special features of this office, we read in Article XIV which discusses the regular call and in Article XXVIII where we are told of the ministers' sphere of authority. In our article the leading thought is that **justifying faith is obtained through the use of the Word and Sacraments.**

2. There was, however, a Reason why the Office of the Ministry was mentioned right at the

beginning of this Article. We must not forget that Melanchthon, in writing the Confession, was always moved by conciliatory interests with respect to the Roman Church. The Romanists insisted upon the priesthood as the means for imparting saving grace. Now the position had been taken in Article IV that *justification is obtained through faith* which is essentially confidence of the sinner in God's forgiving grace. This assertion sounded *very subjective* to Romanistic ears. So Melanchthon here prefers not to mention the *preaching* (as he might have done on the basis of Romans 10:17), but rather the **organ** of it, the ministerial office. This would be received with more favor.¹⁰¹

3. And yet Melanchthon skillfully avoids the Romanistic Conception of the Ministry. He calls it an *office*, not an *order*. It is a ministry (*ministerium*), not a priesthood (*sacerdotium*). It is not an institution of rulership over the Church (*regimen ecclesiae*) so that it is left to the good will of the priest to mediate for the one and to refuse with the other. Let us not overlook that the power of the keys is not even mentioned here. Of this we read in Articles XXV and XXVIII as only one part of the minister's calling and as not of equal importance with the office of preaching the Gospel.¹⁰²

4. It is an "office of teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments." Two things exclusively are mentioned here as constituting the work of the minister: teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments. There is **no mention of a third thing** as co-ordinated with these two,

101. Compare Zoeckler, *Augsburg Confession*, p. 191.

102. Augsb. Conf., Art. XXVIII, 8, Zoeckler, pp. 192, 251.

namely a commission to lead and to guide. The minister is not a pastor *besides* preaching the Gospel and administering the Sacraments, but he is a pastor *through* the use of these means, and through these he guides, directs and rules his congregation in spiritual matters. In social and congregational affairs he may lead and direct but not by divine appointment and authority. These matters are a part of human traditions. Of this part of his work we read in Articles XXVIII and XXV.

5. The Ministry is called an "Office of teaching the Gospel," etc. The Law which also must be preached (compare Article V of the Formula of Concord) is not mentioned. **Was there a special intention of speaking only of the Gospel?** In Article VII also we read in the same way of the "doctrine of the *Gospel*", and in Article XXVIII Melanchthon says of the power of the keys that it is exercised only "by teaching or preaching the *Gospel* and administering the Sacraments". Answering that question we must not overlook that in the terminology of that time (especially with Melanchthon) the term "Gospel" is most frequently used in a synecdochical sense, meaning the most important part, but designating the whole.¹⁰³ In such cases the term "Gospel" in particular is chosen, because the whole doctrine of Christ, who preached Law and Gospel, culminates in the Gospel, that is in the message of "forgiveness of sins and the righteousness that avails before God". But here in our Article V, to show how justifying faith is obtained, the term "Gospel" was chosen for the pur-

103. Formula of Concord, pp. 507. 589; see this book, p. 411.

pose of pointing to the preaching of grace, *in distinction from the preaching of the Law* (Rom. 3:20. F. C. V, 20 ff.), because faith is obtained not through the Law, but only through the Gospel.

6. **"For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who worketh faith,"** etc. Justifying faith is a work of the Holy Ghost. He makes use of the Word (of the Law as preparing the way, of the Gospel as enkindling faith) and the Sacraments, employing them as instruments (*tamquam per instrumenta*). So Word and Sacraments become **means of grace**, and through these means **only** the Holy Ghost works faith. In Article VII of the *Schwabach Articles* we read "There is no other means, no mode, nor way, nor path to obtain faith. For thoughts outside of, or before the hearing of the Word, holy and good as they may seem, are nothing but lies and error." This is confirmed by Luther in the *Smalcald Articles*, when he says: "And in those things which concern the spoken, outward Word, we must firmly hold that God grants His Spirit or grace to no one, except through or with the preceding outward Word." And again: "Just so our enthusiasts condemn the outward Word, and nevertheless they themselves are not silent, but they fill the world with their pratings and writings, as though indeed the Spirit were unable to come through their writings and words. Why do not they also omit their own sermons and writings, until the Spirit Himself come to men, without their writings and before them, as they boast that they have received the Spirit without the preaching of the Scriptures?" (p. 332).

7. **"In them that hear the Gospel."** This is, on man's part, the condition for receiving the Holy Spirit. This word **"hear"** includes *reading* and any way of bringing the truth of the Gospel to man's attention. Weak-minded people in the institutions of Inner Missions are especially aided through the *singing* of the liturgy of the Church and through sacred hymns. *Any of the natural avenues* in man for the access of divine truth are included in this hearing. Where the means of grace are neglected or treated with contempt there the Holy Ghost cannot do His work. It is interesting to follow through the Book of Concord all the references to the hearing of the Gospel.¹⁰⁴

8. **"Where and when it pleases God."** (See Oehler, Symbolik, page 503.) What is the meaning of this seemingly mysterious phrase? **We find these words**, or phrases resembling them, in the Schwabach Articles (VII, "*wie und wo er will*"); in the Marburg Articles (VI, *wo er will*, also VII, "*wo und in welchen er will*"). In the *Editio Princeps* of 1531 Melanchthon writes in the German text: "*wo und wann er will*", in the Latin text: *ubi et quando visum est Deo*. But already in the edition of 1533 Melanchthon abandons this phrase; neither do we find it in the *Variata* of 1540 and its successors. **What is the meaning?** We must *not take it in the sense of absolute predestination*. For Melanchthon expressly states in a letter that he did not refer to Predestination in the A. C. It is not more so than John 3:8. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," or 1 Cor. 12:11: "All

104. See pp. 95 (67); 183; 214 (5); 497 (4 ff.); 499 (13); 562; 661, 662 (76).

these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." Yet this phrase does serve to establish the truth that *the receiving of the Holy Ghost is not a matter of man's powers*. It also indicates the mysterious ways of God's calling grace. *God chooses occasion and time* for the working of faith in the individual. One is converted through this sermon at such and such an occasion, another under altogether different circumstances. Some embrace the comfort of the Gospel in childhood, because they have Christian parents; others at a much later time in their life, and after much struggle. While all *resistance* must be charged to man, *every advance step* in the direction of obtaining faith has to be attributed to God who wills our salvation. So this much discussed phrase "where and when it pleases God" expresses the Augustinian and Lutheran doctrine of divine monergism in man's conversion.

9. The Errorists Rejected. "They condemn the Anabaptists and others who think the Holy Ghost cometh to men without the external Word, through their own preparation and works."

a. The emphasis of the **Anabaptists**, at the time of the Reformation, was upon the Spirit, by which they understood an *inner light* in those who had received the Holy Spirit, manifesting itself in inspirations and revelations. The Zwickau prophets, against whom Luther preached in Wittenberg (1522), belonged to that class; also Thomas Muenzer, Carlstadt, Schwenkfeld, Denk, Hetzer and others.

b. Among the "**others**" Melanchthon must have thought of *Zwingli* and *Oecolampadius*. A

leading thought in the Reformed Church from the beginning was that the divine influences upon man are experienced in an immediate way. This thought was more or less *neutralized* in the Church as it was finally shaped by Calvin. But the original spiritualism of the Reformed Church *asserted itself* in many of the sects that sprang from this source. The extreme is represented by the *Quakers*, which must be regarded as a legitimate daughter of the Reformed Church. Created things, like words of the Bible and the elements of the Sacraments, are not thought to be used by God as necessary instruments and vehicles of His gracious influences upon man, but the Holy Ghost is believed to work immediately. In the Quakers and related sects we have a complete return to the position of the Anabaptists of old. Melancthon, in the **Apology**, characterizes the people of this type as "fanatical men, who dream that the Holy Ghost is given not through the Word, but because of certain preparations of their own, if they sit unoccupied and silent in obscure places, waiting for illumination, as the enthusiasts formerly taught, and the Anabaptists now teach". (Art. XIII, 13). With this phrase of our Confession "through their own preparations and works" we are on exceedingly practical ground. All who are laboring to work themselves into a state of spiritual exaltation by anything that is calculated to excite the feelings fall under the sentence of this article. We have reference to exciting prayer meetings, through which sentiment is worked up during evangelistic campaigns; mannerism in preachers, mostly evangelists, through which they try to bring their hearers under the spell of their personality;

the employment of drastic language in revival meetings. At the basis of it all lies a despising of the God-appointed means of grace.

The Reformed confessions know of no efficacy of divine grace *through* means of grace, because they know of no grace that can be offered to each and every sinner. The conception of absolute, particular grace precludes the Scripture doctrine that God really offers His grace and salvation in and through these outward means, so that man merely has to receive and accept the divine gift.

ARTICLE SIX

Of the New Obedience

Also they teach, that this Faith is bound to bring forth Good Fruits, and that it is necessary to do good works commanded by God, because of God's will, but not that we should rely on those works to merit justification before God. For remission of sins and justification are apprehended by faith, as also the voice of Christ attests: "When ye shall have done all things, say: We are unprofitable servants" [Luke 17: 10]. The same is also taught by the Fathers. For Ambrose says: "It is ordained of God that he who believes in Christ, is saved; freely receiving remission of sins, without works, by faith alone,"

Item docent, quod fides illa debeat bonos fructus parere, et quod oporteat bona opera mandata a Deo facere propter voluntatem Dei, non ut confidamus per ea opera iustificationem coram Deo mereri. Nam remissio peccatorum et iustificatio fide apprehenditur, sicut testatur et vox Christi: Quum feceritis haec omnia, dicite, servi inutiles sumus. Idem docent et veteres scriptores ecclesiastici. Ambrosius enim inquit: Hoc constitutum est a Deo, ut qui credit in Christum, salvus sit, sine opere, sola fide, gratis accipiens remissionem peccatorum.

1. Fabricius suggested as a fitting **superscripton** the words: Of Good Works. This would be in entire harmony with the simple terminology of Melanchthon, and it would sound more natural than our traditional superscripton: Of the New Obedience, a term which is not found in the text of the article. And yet, **the term "New Obedience" is highly suggestive** of the leading thought through this article, namely to represent the works as the fruits of justifying faith. To speak of good works from the viewpoint of an obedience is *thoroughly Scriptural*, but here we have to do with an obedience that is brought about by *a new impulse*: by faith which is not a mere knowledge of a doctrine and consent to it, but above all confidence in the grace of God who forgives the sins because of the merits of Christ.

2. **Supplementary Articles** in other parts of the body of confessional writings of the Lutheran Church indicate the importance of the matter treated in our article. When the Confession was almost completed, Melanchthon decided to add a special article that was to deal more in detail with the subject of faith and good works. So he did in **Article XX**, which is the longest of all articles of the first, the doctrinal, part of the Confession. And in the **Apology**, Melanchthon again devotes much space to the discussion of this matter. His article "Of Love and the Fulfilling of the Law" covers, in the People's Edition of the Book of Concord, the pages from 104 to 161. Here we have a great commentary to our article. And in the **Formula of Concord** we have two articles dealing with questions arising from Article VI of the Augsburg Confession,

which became matters of dispute among the followers of Luther. They are Article IV on "Good Works" and Article VI on the "Third Use of the Law".

3. **The Connection with Art. IV** on Justification is clear when we ask the question: Where is the source for the production of good works? The Confession answers: "Also they teach that **this faith** is bound to bring forth good fruits." Note: "this faith" (*fides illa*). It **points back to** Article IV, to that faith "through" which men are "freely justified for Christ's sake", "when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven". It is this faith (*hanc fidem*) which, according to Article V, has been wrought by the Holy Ghost through Word and Sacrament. There are no good works except those that have justifying faith as their source. First man is made good, and then his works are good also. For this reason the "good works" are here called "good fruits".

4. **An Inner Necessity.** We read: "that this faith is **bound** to bring forth good fruits, and that it is **necessary** to do good works." Note in the German text the words "*soll*" and "*muesse*", in the Latin "*debeat*" and "*oporteat*". Good works are not optional. They must follow, and they will follow as good fruit will be produced by a good tree. The words of our text "**to bring forth**" are a translation from the Latin "*parcere*" (*bonos fructus parere*), used to express the act of producing animal and vegetable life. In this sense the same writer who is quoted at the close of this article¹⁰⁵ calls

105. Melancthon with his age believed that Ambrose was the author of *De vocatione gentium*, but the authorship of the so-called "*Ambrosiaster*" is shrouded in mystery. Hauck, *R. E.*, I, 441.

faith a "*genetrix*" (*Fides bonae voluntatis et justae actionis genetrix est.*). Luther says: "Faith is a divine work in us. It changes us and regenerates us. It mortifies the natural man in us and makes us new in heart, spirit, mind and all powers, and it cannot be without the Holy Spirit. Oh, there is a living, busy and powerful thing about faith. It is impossible that it should not always do good works. It does not stop and ask where good works can be done; before there can be any asking, it does good works and is always doing them." Such inner necessity for doing good works¹⁰⁶ is fundamentally different from being driven by an outward compulsion of the Law, which can result only in works that have the appearance of being good, but which in reality have no value in the sight of God. The Formula of Concord, in Article VI, has valuable statements on the distinction between works of the Law and works of the Spirit.

Note: The Melanchthonian *George Major* made the statement: "Good works are necessary for salvation." This seemed to agree with the words of our article "that this faith is bound to bring forth good fruits and that it is necessary to do good works." But the danger was the Melanchthonian synergism as a special interest back of that statement. So *Nic. Amsdorf*, the extreme follower of Luther, opposed the statement: "Good works are injurious to salvation." *Melanchthon*, replying, called this a "cynical and cyclopic nonsense." The *Formula of Concord*, in Art. IV, settled the controversy by teaching that good works are necessary not in the article of justification, but in the article of sanctification; and that good works may become injurious when "we *rely* upon those works to merit justification before God." One must read these discussions in both the Solid Declaration and in the Epitome to be impressed with the

106. See Formula of Concord, Art. IV, 6.

manner in which our Church insists upon the necessity of always distinguishing between justification and sanctification. The religious interest at stake here is the fundamental statement in Art. IV of the Confession that the sinner is "freely justified for Christ's sake through faith," which alone can make our salvation certain. As soon as we admit anything of good works into the definition of justification or into the ground of salvation then our salvation becomes uncertain, because we can never do all we should do and will always have to stand under the words of Christ: "When ye shall have done all these things, say: We are unprofitable servants" (Luke 17:10).

5. The Motive for Good Works. On this we have a double statement, first a positive and then a negative.

a. Positive: "because of God's will." The Apology mentions three reasons why a believer should do good works: (1) out of gratitude to God; (2) for the exercise and development of faith; (3) as a testimony before the world.

b. Negative: "but not that we should rely on these works to merit justification before God." While good works *are necessary* they do not belong to the *ground* of salvation. This caution against the meritoriousness of anything that may be under discussion (outside of the merit of Christ) runs through the whole Confession (XII, XV, XX, XXI) and is the pivotal center even in Part Two (XXII to XXVIII).

6. The Kind of Works that Faith will Bring Forth. A brief reference to this question was not out of place. We have it in the following: "Good works **commanded by God**", (*mandata a Deo*). This remark is directed against the "evangelical counsels" (*consilia evangelica*) of the **Romanists**.

By this theory of distinguishing between works that God has commanded and such as are not demanded of man, an opportunity should be given to do works that are especially meritorious. As such usually three things were mentioned (1) celibacy, (2) self-chosen poverty, (3) absolute obedience to the Church. These, then, are identical with the vows of monasticism, never appreciated by the Lutheran Church, because they represented a self-chosen sanctity, with no foundation in the Scriptures. The **Lutherans** took the position that anything which love, growing out of faith, compels us to do is simply our Christian duty and in no way optional. They regarded those aforementioned works as useless. Matthew 15:9 was much quoted: "But in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."¹⁰⁷ We need the commandments of God as a guide for enabling us to determine which are good works and which are not. Here Article VI of the Formula of Concord on the "Third Use of the Law" should be read.

ARTICLE SEVEN

Of the Church

Also they teach, that One holy Church is to continue forever. The Church is the congregation of the saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments

Item docent, quod una sancta ecclesia perpetuo mansura sit. Est autem ecclesia congregatio sanctorum, in qua evangelium recte docetur et recte administrantur

107. Luther wrote much on this subject. He saw in these self-chosen works nothing but an "ungodly sanctity" (Erl. Ed. 28, 231), which is no Christian perfection (9, 287; 7, 321; 8, 13; 12, 227), but comes from the devil (22, 65). They do not have the marks of really good works, because they are lacking the impulse from within, or freedom; they do not rest upon a divine commandment; and they benefit nobody. (Weimar Ed. 2, 169 f.)

rightly administered. And to the true unity of the Church, it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, rites, or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike. As Paul says: "One faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." etc. [Eph. 4:5, 5].

sacramenta. Et ad veram unitatem ecclesiae satis est consentire de doctrina evangelii et administratione sacramentorum. Nec necesse est ubique esse similes traditiones humanas, seu ritus aut ceremonias ab hominibus institutas. Sicut inquit Paulus: Una fides, unum baptisma, unus Deus et Pater omnium, cet.

1. The Lutheran Definition of What the Church is. "The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered." Lutheranism, when it came into existence, had to do with two opponents: Roman Catholicism and Anabaptism. Against both of these the definition quoted was directed.

a. The **Roman conception** of the Church was that of an *external organization*, a kind of a state, governed by one will, with common ceremonies as a bond of unity. The church in its essence, properly speaking is, according to Rome, a *corpus mixtum*, comprising, under the pope, the good and the bad, all those that are called and baptized (*vocati et baptizati*). The Romanists see in the *corpus mixtum* the *real essence* of the Christian Church.¹⁰⁸

To this **our Confessors** at Augsburg opposed their definition: The Church, if it is to be defined in its real essence,¹⁰⁹ the Church proper, is the con-

108. Note the contrast with the first clause in Art. VIII.

109. *Stricte sic dictu*, as the old Dogmaticians said, in contrast to *late dictu* — the narrower sense as compared with the wider sense.

gregation of *saints*. The Lutherans **do not deny** that the saints will find themselves in organizations, "hypocrites and evil persons" mingling with them, but what **they reject** is that this *corpus mixtum* condition is the real Church, the Church properly speaking. On the contrary, it is the company of saints, the believers in Christ, that constitute the Church. The hypocrites and evil men are, strictly speaking, not members of the Church, because they are not members of the body of Christ (cf. p. 163, 11). In confirmation of this we quote the **famous passage in Melanchthon's Apology**: "It (the Church) is *in principle* a fellowship of faith and the Holy Ghost in hearts." German text: "The Christian Church consists not alone in fellowship of outward signs, but it consists *chiefly* (fuernehmlich) in inward communion of eternal blessings in the heart, as of the Holy Ghost, of faith, of the fear and love of God" (p. 162). One can easily see **the necessity** for the Lutherans to set forth their attitude toward the Roman conception of the Church. Luther had been solemnly excommunicated; his followers might experience the same at any time. Now they establish themselves upon the immovable rock of the divine Word: "the Church properly" is not a certain organization, but simply the congregation of saints, of true believers, of those that are by faith real members of the body of Christ.

b. The other extreme which the Lutherans had to face was that of the enthusiasts of that day, especially represented by the **Anabaptists**. While to the Romanists the Church was nothing but an institution (false objectivism), these spiritualistic sects of the Reformation time dissolved the Church

into something exclusively spiritual, into something that has an existence only in the hearts of men, into a kind of "Platonic state" without reality (false subjectivism).

Over against this extreme **our Confessors** had to emphasize that the Church is a real *congregation* of saints, an *ecclesia*. *Luther*, in his Small Catechism, calls it, on the basis of the Apostles' Creed, "*eine heilige, allgemeine, christliche Kirche*". Then he interprets that word *Kirche* as a congregation, an assembly or a gathering, a congregation of saints.¹¹⁰ The hearing of the Word is the first step to become members of this congregation. The German text of our article has for "congregation of saints" *die Versammlung aller Gläubigen*: *Melanchthon* says in the Apology: "Neither indeed are we dreaming of a Platonic state . . . (German text: of an imaginary Church which is to be found nowhere, but we say that this Church exists, viz., the truly believing and righteous men scattered throughout the world," (Peoples Edition, p. 165, 20). It has "a fellowship of outward objects and rites, as other governments"; German: a "fellowship of outward signs" (p. 162, 5).

2. The marks of the Church are indicated by the words of our article: "in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments rightly administered" (*in qua evangelium recte docetur et recte administrantur sacramenta*).¹¹¹

110. Large Catechism, p. 445. We call attention to the very illuminating discussion of W. Rohnert (Dogmatik, pp. 497-509) regarding the relation between the local congregation and the Church at large.

111. Besides these *outward* marks there is in the body of our Confessions also reference to marks of a more *internal* character: the Holy Ghost in the hearts of men and the fellowship of faith as characterizing

a. **Parallel passages** are the following as found in the Apology: "which fellowship nevertheless has outward marks, so that it can be recognized, viz., the pure doctrine of the Gospel, and the administration of the Sacraments in accordance with the Gospel of Christ" (p. 162, 5). Again: "And we add the marks 'the pure doctrine of the Gospel and the Sacraments'" (p. 165, 20). In the same connection: "And the Church is properly the pillar of truth (I Tim. :15). For it retains the pure Gospel, and, as Paul says (1 Cor, 3:12), 'the foundation', i. e., the true knowledge of Christ and faith" (116, 1). Again: "And we know that the Church is with those who teach the Word of God aright and administer the Sacraments aright."¹¹²

b. **The term "Gospel"** as used here in this article twice may also be taken as having reference to what Melanchthon calls "the foundation (1 Cor. 3:12), i. e., the true knowledge of Christ and faith."¹¹³ This, however, suggests a thought that can be discussed more profitably in another connection (see below under d).

c. **The twice-employed "rightly."** Many have stumbled over this term *recte*. An unqualified interpretation of this phrase would seem to mean that the Church of Christ does not exist where the teaching of the Gospel is not pure. Some have been disposed to discount the **serious intention** of this word "rightly", and have preferred to treat it as a

the Church proper, the true believers (Apology, p. 167) (28) ; 162 (5). In our article the outward marks only are mentioned.

112. 217 (27). Notice the word "aright", used twice, corresponding to the "rightly" in our article. Compare with this the discussion below under c.

113. Apology, p. 166 (1).

slip of Melanchthon's pen. But that cannot be done. From a text of our Confession (as it was at the beginning of May), and found in the Nuremberg archive, we learn that the earlier drafts of the Confession up to this date did not yet have this word *recte*.¹¹⁴ But Melanchthon added it before the Confession was publicly read and delivered on June 25th. This appears clearly from Paul Tschackert, *Kritische Ausgabe der Unveraenderten Augsburgischen Konfession*, p. 68. So we must agree that this *recte* was **added by Melanchthon for a purpose**. It can be compared to a postscript in a letter, which will never be looked upon as a slip of the pen. And let us not forget that such additions and changes were frequently made as a result of conferences and consultations between Melanchthon and the other Confessors at Augsburg. Let us note, furthermore, that **Melanchthon repeats this word in the Apology**, when he says: "And we know that the Church is with those who teach the Word of God *aright*, and administer the Sacraments *aright*" 217 (27). "Aright" is again the translation of the Latin *recte*.¹¹⁵ The **German text** of the Augsburg Confession reads as follows: "*in welchen das Evangelium rein gepredigt und die Sacramente laut des Evangelii gereicht werden*". So, then, we cannot deny that Article VII of our Confession, in speaking of the marks (*notae*) of the Church, insists that the Gospel must be "rightly" preached (pure, *rein*), and that the administration of the Sacraments must be according to the Scriptures.

114. Th. Kolde, *Die aelteste uns bekannte Augsburgische Konfession*, p. 51.

115. See our quotation of the Latin text.

d. What is the standard from this for the recognition of true churches? **How are we to judge of the various denominations** as to the question where the true Church of Christ is to be found?

First: *Can we say of the Lutheran Church that there "the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments rightly administered"?* To answer this question correctly we have to divide it into two questions:

(1) *Can we say of the Lutheran Church as represented by its Confessions that it is pure in the teaching of the Word and Sacraments?* Every one who is a Lutheran of conviction, having examined the Confessions in the light of the Scriptures, will affirm this. And it seems to us that others also, if they could just rid themselves of prejudices, would, after a candid examination, reach the same conclusion. The Scripturalness of the Lutheran Confessions will captivate him who gives himself to a thorough study of them. But

(2) *Can we claim of the Lutheran Churches everywhere that they actually do teach the Gospel rightly and that their administration of the Sacraments rests upon the Scriptural conceptions?* This is an altogether different question. The Lutheran name and the official subscription to the Lutheran standards of doctrine do not always guarantee a teaching after the Lutheran Confessions. The real Lutheran character of a church depends upon the significance which such subscription to the Confessions has, it depends upon the spirit and actual attitude of the church to the Creed. There are theologians of Lutheran name, who find themselves in

disagreement with the doctrine of man's total depravity as taught in Article II of the Augustana; who teach a Christ that can be no Savior (against Article III); who in their conception of justification and sanctification (Articles IV and VI) are moving on Roman Catholic ground—an error common in pietistic circles, as also among the men who are interested in a union between Lutherans and Reformed; who ignore the appointed means of grace and expect to draw the Holy Spirit by all kinds of human efforts (against Article V); who can never learn the meaning of Holy Baptism for the life of the Christian, to whom the Sacraments are nothing but symbols (against Articles V, IX and X). Occasionally we find more Scriptural conceptions in other denominations than in Lutheran churches.¹¹⁶ So in answering our above question we can only say: *Lutheran Churches and organizations are representatives of the true Church of Christ only in so far as they actually live up to their Confessions in doctrine and practice.*

Second: Now we have paved the way for a brief discussion of **how we should regard the other denominations.** Can we say of the other churches that they are true Churches of Christ in the sense of our article? Can we as Lutherans admit that in the other churches "the Gospel is

116. A Lutheran missionary in New Mexico, the only representative of Lutheranism in that territory, once told me that he visited, at the place of his old bishopric (Albuquerque), a conference of Methodist negroes, and there he witnessed their celebration of the Lord's Supper. But how surprised he was to see these negroes, in their child-like way of expressing religion, to be unconsciously dominated all through their service by that Biblical realism which is characteristic of the Lutheran Church. Not all Lutherans are in the Lutheran Church.

rightly taught and the Sacraments *rightly* administered”?

(1) We are justified in making the following statement: **If we are certain that our Confessions are Scriptural then we must regard the teaching of other churches as unscriptural on the points where they reject the teaching of our Confessions.** Can there be anything more rational and conclusive than this statement? Yes and No cannot dwell together in one conviction.

Note: In 1581, Z. Ursinus, co-author of the Heidelberg Catechism, published in the name of the other Reformed theologians of his day a refutation of the Formula of Concord.¹¹⁷ After the persistent efforts in the Crypto-Calvinistic agitation of uniting Lutherans and Reformed upon the basis of a Calvinism tempered by Bucerism and Philipism had come to naught through the work of Andreae and Chemnitz and after the Book of Concord had been published (1580), the most thorough testimony against Lutheranism was published by Ursinus, one of the noblest theologians of the Reformed Church. Here it was where the two great churches of the Reformation parted ways for good. If there is anything that a reading of the Formula of Concord and the Neustadt Admonition can make clear, it is the truth which Luther uttered at Marburg when he said to Zwingli, not in bitterness, but in a friendly way: “Ye have another spirit than we.” Over the grave of Zacharias Ursinus today in the Cathedral Church at Neustadt we read, as part of the inscription which the grateful Reformed Church wrote upon his monument: “. . . the successful antagonist to the heresies on the person of Christ and His Supper.” So we see: Both churches regard each other as erring. But then we cannot admit of both that by them “the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments rightly administered.” The Lutherans, in so far as they are Lutherans of conviction, must deny it to the Reformed; and the Reformed, if they are true to their

117. *Neostadiensium Admonitio*, see Hauck's *R. E.* XIII, 709; Meusel, *Kirchl. Handlexikon* (1st ed.) VII, p. 26.

whole position, cannot do otherwise than to insist that theirs is the Scriptural conception.

(2) *But can we not say that the differences consists only in the viewpoints taken*, so that both sides have the "Gospel" from a different point of view?

It is a very superficial idea that the difference exists only in a few doctrines. The Lutheran doctrine is a unit; so is the Calvinistic. The question could rather be raised: In which doctrines is there true and real agreement as long as the Lutheran teaches free salvation by *universal* grace, and the Calvinistic *particular* salvation by *absolute* grace? It is true, for instance, that the Calvinists hold with us *the doctrine of justification*. But they have it from a peculiar viewpoint, the sovereignty of God who did justify the few elect ages ago and now merely makes them to realize this fact. This does not do away with the Gospel, yet the Gospel of free grace becomes beclouded since it is true only in the few instances. Under Calvinistic preaching, God appears to us more as a stern Lord than as a loving Father. We are more His obedient servants than His confiding children. A wrong viewpoint can seriously affect the teaching of the Gospel. But **the difference is not always just in viewpoints.** This we can see when we take, for instance, *the Lord's Supper*. Here the one side positively rejects what the other side accepts. The difference between Lutherans and Baptists on *the Sacrament of Baptism* is another case. The difference is a radical one: what the Lutherans regard as a real means of grace and the source of the new religious life, this is to the Baptists an act of obedience on the part of the

converted, in which he submits to a ceremony of religious significance. What the one side accepts as a doctrine of the divine Word the other rejects as human error. It is impossible that, in the sense of our article, both can be the Church "in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments rightly administered."

(3) **But perhaps we can solve the difficulty by a closer examination of the term "Gospel."** There are those that say: The differences between the "orthodox" or "evangelical" denominations have nothing to do with the Gospel, the "glad tidings"; these differences simply show us the superstructure erected upon the foundation. The reference to 1 Cor. 3:9-15 is familiar. The lesson is drawn that as long as the foundation is not rejected the existence of the Church of Christ cannot be denied. There is much truth in this, and upon this thought we shall try to build our final solution of the problem in the next paragraph (4). Yet permit us to say that in the application of the above quoted passage from 1 Corinthians many have fallen victims to most dangerous fallacies. There is a long passage bearing on this question in the Apology which we shall quote in full. While reading it let us keep in mind a few questions: *Is there no essential relation between the foundation and the superstructure?* Do such errors as Semi-Pelagianism, Arminianism, synergism not detract from the Gospel? Is the assurance of salvation not bound to be affected by the doctrine of predestination as taught by Calvin? or is not something of the comfort of the Gospel lost by the denial of Baptism as an objective means of grace?

Now let us read the quotation from the Apology (p. 165, 2): "And we add the marks 'the *pure* doctrine of the Gospel, and the Sacraments.' And this Church is properly the pillar of truth (1 Tim. 3:15). For it retains the *pure* Gospel, and, as Paul says (1 Cor. 3:12), 'the foundation,' i. e., the *true* knowledge of Christ and faith. Although among these (in the body which is built upon the true foundation, i. e., upon Christ and faith), there are also many weak persons, who, upon the foundation, build stubble that will perish, i. e., certain unprofitable opinions (German: some human thoughts and opinions), which, nevertheless, because they do not overthrow the foundation, are both forgiven them, and also corrected. And the writings of the holy Fathers testify that sometimes even they built stubble upon the foundation, but that this did not overthrow their faith. But most of those errors which our adversaries defend overthrow faith; as their condemnation of the article concerning the remission of sins, in which we say that the remission of sins is received by faith. Likewise manifest and pernicious is the error, in that the adversaries teach that men merit the remission of sins by love to God, prior to grace. For this also is to remove 'the foundation,' i. e. Christ."

(4) Now, for a final answer, we again ask the question: **Does the phrase in our article ("where the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered") exclude the thought that the Church of Christ has its existence also among the other denominations?** Remember, we have not said that the Lutheran Church, *as an organization existing here and there,*

is the only true Church in the sense of our article. We stated that absolute purity of doctrine is the goal for the development in many parts of the Lutheran Church. The Confessions of our Church are Scriptural, but to what extent have we succeeded in embracing their truth in all directions? This is a question which each organization representing the Church of the Augsburg Confession the world over has to answer for itself. As Lutherans of conviction we cannot admit that the churches which oppose the teachings of the Augsburg Confession, as far as their Creeds are concerned, are, in the full sense of our article, the Church "in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered." It would be a *contradictio in adjecto*. But even in this respect we would not say that there is no representation of the Church of Christ. In the Creeds of some churches the foundation, while *affected* by errors inseparable from the foundation, has not been *overthrown*; in other churches again, the errors overshadow the saving truth of the Gospel in a most deplorable manner, so that it is hard to discover even some remnants of the One Holy Church of which our article speaks. We can lay this down as a principle: The One true Christian Church exists in all the denominations to the extent (*quatenus*) in which the foundation has been kept intact and has not been vitiated by errors detracting from the Gospel of Jesus as the Savior of sinners. And even this may be admitted: The unscriptural principles in the Creeds of some churches affecting the foundation do not always work themselves out in the convictions of their ministers and members. The Bible, with much

truly Scriptural literature, is constantly counter-acting these influences, so that many a truly evangelical testimony can be heard from these quarters. Spurgeon, a Baptist as to church affiliation, was an example. The error appears localized, even neutralized.

3. The "One Holy Church is to continue forever." The Church of Christ, in so far as she is *the congregation of saints and true believers*, characterized by that inherent necessity of coming into appearance with a pure teaching of the Word and with an administration of the Sacraments in accordance with the Word of God, has the promise of continuing to the end of the days; neither can this Church, "*the Church properly*" (Art. VIII), fall into error. *Particular churches* may go out of existence, or fall into error, but not so the Church proper. (Matthew 16:18; 28:20; 24:24).

4. The Unity of the Church. The Lutherans, as we have seen, admitted that *One* holy Church is to continue forever. But by doing away with so many of the **traditions, rites and ceremonies** of the Roman Catholic Church they seemed to have destroyed this unity. To this charge, which was a grave one also from a political standpoint, as it endangered the unity of the German empire, an answer had to be made in this article.

a. We have the answer in the following words: "And to the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments." Latin: *Et ad veram unitatem ecclesiae satis est consentire de doctrina evangelii et administratione sacramentorum.* This is **the positive part of the**

answer. A very important statement. Here we have the leading **principle for Church union**. Where there is agreement with respect to the means of grace there is unity, but only there. Where this agreement is lacking there should certainly be no *organic union*.¹¹⁸

What is the attitude of the Lutheran Church with regard to *altar fellowship*? Luther always considered altar fellowship possible only where there is agreement in "the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments." This has become the general practice of the Lutheran Church. Even a man like Spener wrote: "Because the communion with a congregation includes that one approves of the doctrine of this same congregation especially in the article of such Sacrament; . . . therefore I cannot see how we can take the communion in those churches whose doctrine of the communion we ourselves believe and profess not to be correct, thus giving one testimony with our mouth and another with our act . . . Therefore is this doctrine the most manifest partition wall between the two Churches. How can we then have a common fellowship (*gemeine Mahl*) together?"¹¹⁹

118. The Union as it developed in Prussia is confederative in character, existing chiefly in the sphere of church government, the Lutheran congregations using the Lutheran, the Reformed the Heidelberg Catechism, both sides also being provided with liturgical formulas of their own. The German Evangelical Synod of America is an absorptive union, the Lutheran and the Heidelberg Catechism having been blended into a new one (Irion's Catechism), with a neutral attitude as to the doctrinal differences of the two churches, which finds expression also in the liturgical formulas for ministerial acts, in the hymn book, etc. For a thorough discussion read chapter VI in my book "The Lutherans in the Movements for Church Union, 1921, United Luth. Publ. House, Philadelphia, Pa.

119. *Letzte theologische Bedenken*, II, 43 seq., III, 81, 83 seq.

The same holds true in regard to *pulpit fellowship*. It must be kept in mind that the sermon is not a lecture in which a person presents his own personal views, nor a matter which concerns only himself, but it is one of the most important parts of the devotional life of a congregation, in which the minister is the servant of Christ as well as of the Church. As such he functions in the liturgy. Furthermore he has been instructed to preach the Word and apply it. Therefore only one who is in agreement with the faith and confession of the respective church can consistently be admitted into a pulpit, or accept an invitation to a pulpit. The life of the Church is such that we would not deny that there can be exceptions to the rule. These, however, should not be practiced to break the rule. There are meetings of churches, that do not involve the real cultus of the Church, and there a contact between Christian preachers may be permitted, that should not be practiced in the regular services of the sanctuary. And even with regard to the latter there may be circumstances that justify the exception. Then the confessional note of the sermon must be such that the principle is safeguarded.¹²⁰

b. Now follows the **negative statement**: "Nor is it necessary that human traditions, rites and ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike." These words are also important. Such **traditions, rites and ceremonies** are not here unconditionally rejected. *Some*, of course, must be rejected, as will be seen in Article XV, namely, such

120. See in regard to this controversy the history of the old General Council in Neve, Brief History; Spaeth, Life of Krauth II, 222 ff; Life of Spaeth, p. 163 f.

as have been "instituted to propitiate God, to merit grace, and to make satisfaction for sins"; but *not those* "which may be observed without sin, and which are profitable unto tranquillity and good order in the Church." Yet while some of these "human traditions, rites and ceremonies, instituted by men," may be right and even helpful and under certain conditions ought to be observed *jure humano* (not *jure divino*), nevertheless, we are **not warranted in making the observance of them essential to the unity of the Church.** Among the *Reformed Churches* an erroneous principle became established by treating the question of church government as an element co-ordinated with the agreement concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Congregationalists have separated on question of church government. In the *Lutheran Church* all these forms of government are used as training and tradition as the different nation may demand.

ARTICLE EIGHT

The Ministry of Evil Men in the Church

Although the Church is properly the Congregation of Saints and true believers, nevertheless, since, in this life, many hypocrites and evil persons are mingled therewith, it is lawful to use the Sacraments, which are administered by evil men; according to the saying of Christ: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat,"

Quamquam ecclesia proprie sit congregatio sanctorum et vere credentium, tamen quum in hac vita multi hypocritae et mali admixti sint, licet uti sacramentis, quae per malos administrantur, iuxta vocem Christi; Sedent scribae et Pharisei in cathedra Moysis cet. Et Sacramenta et verbum propter ordinationem et manda-

etc. [Matt. 23:2]. Both the Sacraments and Word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, notwithstanding they be administered by evil men.

They condemn the Donatists, and such like, who denied it to be lawful to use the ministry of evil men in the Church, and who thought the ministry of evil men to be unprofitable and of none effect.

tum Christi sunt efficacia, etiamsi per malos exhibeantur.

Damnant Donatistas et similes, qui negabant licere uti ministerio malorum in ecclesia, et sentiebant ministerium malorum inutile et inefficax esse.

1. **A Significant Repetition** is contained in the words with which our article begins: "Although the Church is *properly* the congregation of saints and true believers," etc. Our attention is again called to **the distinction** between the Church strictly speaking (*stricte dictu*) and the Church in the wider sense (*large dictu*). We see that we were not mistaken in the interpretation of Article VII. For here, in Article VIII, both sides of the Church are spoken of, as almost in contrast with each other: on the one hand is the Church properly speaking, the congregation of saints and true believers; and on the other side the Church as she actually exists: the congregation of true believers among which then many hypocrites are mixed, but cannot be known.

In the language of the theologians we have come to use **the terms "invisible" and "visible"** Church to describe these two sides; but these terms are not employed in the Augsburg Confession. They can be so **misunderstood** as to convey

the impression that there is nothing visible to the Church properly speaking. The One Holy Church, as we learned from the Apology, (p. 165, 20) is not a Platonic state, not "an imaginary Church which is to be found nowhere," not an abstract conception, but children of God "here and there in all the world, in various kingdoms, islands, lands and cities, from the rising of the sun to its setting, who have truly learned to know Christ and His Gospel." We could not rely on a statistics of these believers—that would take us into the sphere of the organized visible Church; but the true believers are there. We come into touch with many of them, we hear their testimony, we behold their walk and conversation, we see them dying as Stephen did. So we have also something visible before us in the pure teaching of the Word and in the administration of the Sacraments according to Christ's command. The One Holy Church which is to continue forever is not a soul without a body. This is an error not only of the Anabaptists, but also of the Reformed Church.¹²¹ The description of the Church as invisible and visible came **into use also among the Lutherans**, but we are cautioned against the above possible misinterpretation. Since Gerhard, the Lutheran dogmaticians have preferred to use the terms: *die Kirche im eigentlichen und uneigentlichen Sinne*; (English: properly and not properly speaking) or: *Kirche im engeren und weiteren Sinn*

121. Zwingli, in his *Expositio Fidei*, defines the Church as the *ecclesia invisibilis*. He was the first to use this term. Calvin, in distinguishing between the two sides of the Church speaks of the *coetus vocatorum* and the *coetus electorum* (*Institutio IV*), and in his Catechism defines the Church proper as the body and the association of believers whom God in His secret election has predestinated to eternal life. This association is entirely invisible, and is discernible to the eyes by no sign.

(in the narrower and wider sense). The invisibility they take as indistinctibility. All guard against the conception of two different churches. It is one and the same Church which is visible or invisible in different respects, as it stands before the eyes of God, and on the other hand before the eyes of man. As the "invisible" Church has visible features, as we have seen above, so also the "visible" Church has features of invisibility, viz., the close connection of the truly believing with the "hypocrites and evil persons," the constant work of the Church upon these to lead them to conversion.¹²² **The mistake of the Reformed** is this, that, instead of distinguishing between the two sides of one and the same Church, they let the Church fall apart into two churches and so separate soul and body. Philippi calls the Reformed conception of the Church "a mechanical addition of both elements" (*eine mechanische Addition beider Momente*). But both are one, like body and soul. The Church is not only an actual communion of believers, but because of the Holy Spirit's constant work also a communion which is in a continuous process of formation (*nicht nur die im Glauben versammelte, sondern auch die fuer den Glauben sammelnde Gemeinde*). **Luther**, in his Large Catechism, says: "The Holy Ghost effects our sanctification, as follows, namely, by the communion of saints or Christian Church," etc. (p. 443, 37). Again: "For where Christ is not preached, there is no Holy Ghost *who makes, calls and gathers* the Christian Church," etc. (p. 444, 45). So the Church would be not only *Heilsgemeinschaft*, but at the same time *Heilsanstalt*,

122. Compare Rohnert, Dogmatik, p. 501.

that is not only the communion of those that have found salvation in Christ, but also an institution serving as the organ of the Holy Spirit who works through the means of grace for the conservation and extension of the kingdom upon earth.¹²³

2. The Efficacy of the Means of Grace, even when Administered by Unregenerated Persons, is the chief subject of this article. The first sentence leads up to this as the **real theme**. Therefore, the old superscription "What the Church is," was not well chosen. The Confutation expressed it correctly: *De ministris malis et hypocritis*. The object of this article is to establish an important principle with reference to the efficacy of the means of grace.

"In this life many hypocrites and evil persons are mingled" with the "saints and true believers." It cannot be otherwise in this life where we can see into no man's heart and cannot be absolutely sure as to the sincerity of a man's profession. This admission forces us to another admission: we cannot be sure, absolutely sure, that *even the ministers* of the congregations are always godly men. They are of flesh and blood, and tempted to sin like the rest of humanity. This brings us face to face with

123. There are **two schools** with regard to this subject even among Lutheran theologians. *The one* distinguishes in a more or less mechanical way between the invisible and the visible Church; is careful in excluding the marks (*notae*) of the true Church from a definition of its essence which is found exclusively in its invisibility; the Church is the spiritual communion that *would* exist visibly if in this life the true believers *could* know each other. The standard bearer of this school is the Missouri Synod. *The other* school adds the phrase of Art. VII, "in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments rightly administered" to the definition of what the Church is, and finds elements of visibility also in the Church proper. Extremists in this direction were Vilmar and Grabau with the old Buffalo Synod. Stahl, Kliefoth, Huschke held to views of the same kind. Loehe, Iowa-Synod, Rohnert represent the more moderate position.

the serious question: *Are the ministerial acts of ungodly men valid?* How with their preaching of the Word? How with the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper? **Our article answers** this question with the following words: "Is it lawful to use the Sacraments, which are administered by evil men; according to the saying of Christ: The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat, etc. (Matthew 23:2). Both the Sacraments and Word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, even though they are administered by evil men." To this statement the **Apology** adds the following: "Neither does the fact that the Sacraments are administered by the unworthy detract from their efficacy, because, on account of the call of the Church, they represent the person of Christ, and do not represent their own persons, as Christ testifies (Luke 10:16): 'He that heareth you, heareth Me,' (In the German text: 'Thus even Judas was sent to preach.' When they offer the Word of God, when they offer the Sacraments, they offer them in the stead and place of Christ" (p. 167, 28). And in the **Large Catechism** Luther says with increasing emphasis: "Even though a knave take or distribute the Sacrament, he receives the true Sacrament, that is, the true body and blood of Christ, just as truly as he who receives or administers it in the most worthy manner. For it is not founded upon the holiness of men, but upon the Word of God."¹²⁴

124. Page 476 (16); repeated in the Formula of Concord, page 605, (24).

3. Who are quoted here as Opponents of this Principle? "They condemn the Donatists and such like, who, etc."

(a) The **Donatists** differed from the *Novatians* (rejected in Art. XII, on Repentance), especially in this, that they denied the validity of the Sacraments administered by the priests of the Church which was then characterized by much worldliness.

(b) "**And such like.**" Here Melanchthon must have thought of the *Anabaptists*, in that day the copies of the ancient Donatists, although they are mentioned neither here nor in the Apology.¹²⁵ We are sure that *Wickliffe* was included in the phrase "and such like," because he is mentioned with the Donatists in the Apology (p. 168, 29). He was very outspoken in the emphasis of the principle that unworthy men cannot administer the Sacraments. *Schwenkfeld* also belongs to this class, as can be seen from the enumeration of his errors at the close of the Formula of Concord (p. 670): "That the minister of the Church who is not on his part truly renewed, righteous and godly cannot teach other men with profit or administer true Sacraments."¹²⁶

Remark: The *Roman Catholic Church* demands that there must be, on the part of the officiating priest, the intention to administer the Sacraments in harmony with the faith of the church, if his acts are to be valid. *Spener* and some of his followers took the position that there must be in the minister a certain degree of personal ability and worthi-

125. On Luther's polemics against the principles of Anabaptists see Plitt, II, 241 ff.

126. The systematic development of Schwenkfeld's doctrines falls in the time after the writing of the Augustana.

ness, if the means of grace are to effect the salvation of the hearers. This thought can be so used, and has been so emphasized in pietistic quarters that it amounts to a violation of the principle confessed in Art. VIII of our Confession.

ARTICLE NINE

Of Baptism

Of Baptism, they teach, that it is necessary to salvation, and that through Baptism is offered the grace of God; and that children are to be baptized, who, being offered to God through Baptism, are received into His grace.

They condemn the Anabaptists, who allow not the Baptism of children, and say that children are saved without Baptism.

De baptismo docent, quod sit necessarius ad salutem, quodque per baptismum offeratur gratia Dei, et quod pueri sint baptizandi, qui per baptismum oblati Deo recipiantur in gratiam Dei.

Damnant Anabaptistas, qui improbant baptismum puero-
rum et affirmant pueros sine
baptismo salvos fieri.

1. **The Brevity of this Article** has been wondered at, because Baptism constitutes a very important part in the doctrinal system of our church. But we must keep in mind that *the Augsburg Confession did not aim at a complete exhibition of the doctrines of the Scriptures* and was not written to take the place of Melancthon's *Loci* or any dogmatics. The points of difference were discussed, or such points in which the Lutherans were in danger of being misrepresented. In the doctrine on Baptism the *common ground* between the Lutherans and the Roman Catholic Church was very large. The Confutation accepted Art. IX *in toto* — not altogether consistently, as can be seen from their objection to Art. II. But most of what our Art. IX

contains is *directed against the sects and tendencies* representing the scale from the Anabaptists up to the teachings of Zwingli and his associates.

2. An Observation of Historical Interest.

From the beginning of May to the twenty-fifth of June the Augsburg Confession was in a constant process of formulation. We hear of the *draft of May 11th*, which Luther saw (Compare p. 81). We know of another draft that was sent to Nuremberg about the *beginning of June*, which has recently been discovered in the Nuremberg archives, and in this draft we see that our Art. IX did not yet have the form which it has in the copy that was read before the emperor. It was *composed of just this one sentence*: "They teach that children are to be baptized, and that through Baptism they are offered to God and received into His grace." So we see that *at first the intention was* chiefly to insist on infant Baptism against the Anabaptists. Later, it was decided by Melanchthon, or in the counsel of the Confessors, to *add something more* on the doctrine of Baptism in general.¹²⁷

3. "Of Baptism, they teach, that it is **necessary to salvation.**" (Latin: *necessarius ad salutem*. German: *das sie noetig sei*). We must not take this to mean that Baptism is *under all circumstances* necessary for salvation. There may be times when the Sacrament is not obtainable for the one who desires it, or a person may be ignorant as to its necessity, or some one may not know that he never was baptized. God has also other ways to work saving faith in the heart. But while God is not bound to the rule, **we have no right to make**

127. Kolde, *Die aelteste Redaktion*, p. 51.

the exceptions from the rule He laid down for us. God will hold us responsible when we treat His Sacrament with indifference or contempt and disobey His direct order. Augustine: *Non defectus, sed contemnus baptisimi damnat*. Baptism "is necessary to salvation." With this same statement Melancthon begins his short article in the **Apology** (p. 173, 51). Luther says in his **Large Catechism**: "It is most solemnly and rigidly commanded that we must be baptized or we cannot be saved. It is not, then, to be regarded as a trifling matter, like the putting on of a new coat. . . . The world is now so full of sects which claim that Baptism is a merely external thing, and that external things are of no use. But let it be ever so much an external thing, here stand God's Word and commandment which have instituted, established and confirmed Baptism," (p. 466, 7-8). The necessity of Baptism for salvation is **founded upon** the fact that it is the Sacrament of regeneration and the God-appointed means for imparting the spiritual life. Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; John 3:5; Titus 3:5; Romans 6:3; Gal. 3:27. With Baptism the spiritual life of man is to take its beginning.

Note: If Baptism is "necessary to salvation" as our article says, if it is an appointed means of grace through which we are "born again" (Art. II) and through which we "are received into His grace," then no one should be deprived of it in the hour of death, merely because an ordained minister is not at hand. In such case a layman, even a woman, may administer Baptism. Such "Baptism in case of extreme necessity" (*Nottaufe*) has always been customary in the Lutheran Church. Ex. 4:24 has been quoted in favor of this practice. The Reformed churches have not adopted it. But to them Baptism is not a real means of grace, in which God, through the act, offers and actually bestows the grace

of adoption into His Kingdom to the recipient of the Sacrament. To us, Baptism is a real means of grace. Therefore the order of the Church with respect to the administration of the Sacrament by regularly called and ordained ministers (see Art XIV) is second to the need.¹²⁸

4. A Double Phrase of Significance for the Lutheran Conception of Baptism. There are two elements in the Lutheran conception of Baptism: the objective and the subjective. Both are here indicated.

a. On the one hand, Baptism is something **objective**, an act of God, of the triune God; independent of man's willing, endeavors and resolutions. We have it in the phrase of our text: "in order that they should be received into His grace" (*qui recipiantur in gratiam Dei*). Here man is passive, as in the act of justification ("are freely justified," *gratis justificentur*, Art. IV). The divine act in which man is received into God's grace we call **regeneration**. Though this term is not used here, as in Art. II in connection with Baptism this is included. There it is said that eternal death shall come upon those that "are not born again through Baptism and the Holy Ghost." To this objective side of Baptism there is ample reference in the other confessional writings of our Church; and there was no need of stating it, since the Catholic Church teaches this also. In the language of *Melanchthon*, "Baptism is a work, not that we offer to God, but in which God baptizes us, i. e., the minister in the place of God."¹²⁹ *Luther* also calls

128. The Reformed Confessions (*Confessio Helvetica* II, 20; *Confessio Gallicana*, Art. 35) reject the Baptism of extreme necessity (*Nottaufe*).

129. Apology, p. 262 (18).

it "God's work." In his Catechisms he speaks of it in connection with the outward sign. It is "not simply water, but water comprehended in God's Word and commandment, and sanctified thereby, so that it is nothing else than a divine water," "heavenly, holy, and blessed." It is one way by which God gives us aid against sin. (Sm. Art. IV). Augustine is quoted: "When the Word is joined to the element, it becomes a Sacrament."¹³⁰ With reference to Titus 3:5, Luther calls it "a washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Article XIII contains the Lutheran doctrine of Baptism as a Sacrament or means of grace in the words "to be signs and testimonies *of the will of God toward us*, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those that use them" and "the promises which are offered and set forth through the Sacraments." This is an essential part of the Lutheran doctrine. In Baptism God in a way that He has not revealed to us creates faith in the infant child (regenerates, gives spiritual light, receives as His child or whatever similar terms may be used). God declares to the human individual, that the eternal universal grace of God and the atonement wrought by Christ on Calvary are truly and really meant and given by Him in order to be accepted and retained for all time. Thus the grace of God is really present as the gift. And faith on the part of man is the act of receiving the same. Thus even the infant is justified or received as a child of God. If in later life doubts arise in the soul as to God's relation to me, I can always fall back upon my Baptism, where God has solemnly assured me that I should

130. Large Catechism, p. 467, 10 ff.

be His own, and that He will for time and eternity be my Father in heaven. Thus faith is confirmed by Baptism in later life.

b. This **subjective** element and the permanent value of Baptism throughout the whole life is the correlative of God's action. By receiving and accepting the gift of God (or: faith wrought by God Himself) the benefit of Baptism becomes our own. And there is no other way of receiving the divine gift ("through Baptism is offered the grace of God") than by accepting or in other words, by faith. Thus *Luther*, insisting that Baptism must not be "regarded only according to the external act once performed and completed," says: "Therefore every Christian has enough in Baptism to learn all his life. For he has always enough to do to believe firmly what Baptism promises and brings, viz.: victory over death and the devil, forgiveness of sin, the grace of God, the entire Christ and the Holy Ghost with His gifts. . . . We must so regard Baptism and avail ourselves of the blessing that when our sins and conscience oppress us, we strengthen ourselves and take comfort and say: I am baptized, and if baptized it is promised me that I shall be saved and have eternal life."¹³¹

5. "**Children are to be baptized.**" It simply **follows** if Baptism is "necessary to salvation." Melancthon argues from Matthew 28:19 (Baptize all nations): "Just as there salvation is offered to all, so Baptism is offered to all: to men, women, children, infants."¹³² It is **in no respect contrary to common sense** when children in a Christian

131. *Ibidem*, p. 471 (41-44). Comp. also p. 474 (65 ff.).

132. *Apology*, p. 173 (52).

church at the very beginning of their life are received, by an act of God Himself, into the Kingdom of God.¹³³ **Children should not be denied the right to the Sacrament of Baptism.** No parents would exclude their children from the home because of their not yet being able to take part in directing its affairs (Zoeckler). The poor child became contaminated with sin already before its birth; why should it not rightly be received into the great hospital of the Christian Church where its wounds may be healed by the Savior of men? (Sartorius) The objection is that the Baptism of children is not profitable, because they **cannot believe**. It is interesting to read *Luther's appendix on "Infant Baptism" to the fourth part of his Larger Catechism* (p. 471). He contends for infant Baptism, because faith (which he does not want to deny in the child) has nothing to do with the validity of the Sacrament, which depends solely upon the Word and the commandment of God: "Therefore they are presumptuous and likewise obtuse minds that draw such inferences and conclusions as that where there is not the true faith, there also can be no true Baptism. Just as if I would draw the inference: If I do not believe, then Christ is nothing; or thus: If I am not obedient, then father, mother and government are nothing" (473, 58). As to faith in the child Luther has this to say: "We bring the child in the purpose and hope that it may believe, and we pray that God may grant it faith; but we do not baptize it

133. Vilmar, *Augsb. Konfession*, p. 100. This, of course, is not to say that children should be baptized against the will, or without the knowledge of the parents. The guarantee for a Christian training in some way cannot be dispensed with.

upon that, but solely upon the command of God," (ibidem). For faith even in the adult is not of himself, but is wrought by God.

Note: In his writings Luther has expressed himself in different ways on the subject of *child faith*. Against Rome he always insisted on faith as necessary to receive the blessing of Baptism. The power that lies in Baptism by virtue of the Word can, even in the case of children, become efficacious only by means of faith. Sometimes he writes as if children have faith, and then again (as in the above quotation from the Large Catechism) as if that faith is effected through Baptism. There is no contradiction in this. When he speaks of faith already present in the child, as he did in his conversation with Bucer, 1536, preliminary to the drawing up of the Wittenberg Concord,¹³⁴ he has in mind the "beginning of faith in children," their need of salvation and their non-resistance, the *fides directa* of the later dogmatists as contrasted with the *fides reflexa et discursiva*.¹³⁵ Pointing to the mystery as regards the existence of faith in children, he cited the presence of faith in believers during sleep. When he spoke of faith to be granted the child through Baptism, he had in mind faith as an organ that is to grow and develop and become capable of receiving all the rich blessings that have been made ours in Baptism.

6. The Silence of our Article on the Mode of Baptism reminds us of the fact that the Lutheran Church is not interested in the question whether Baptism should be administered by sprinkling or by immersion. It cannot be proved by the Scriptures to be an essential matter. It would come in under the discussion of Art. XV (Good Order in the Church).

7. The Opponents of this Article. The charge against the **Anabaptists** is that they "allow

134. Koestlin, *Theology of Luther*, II, 57. Cf. *Luth. Cyclopaedia*, p. 545.

135. Rohnert, p. 419, 425-26.

not the Baptism of children, and say that children are saved without Baptism." Leading Anabaptists were Denk, Hetzer, Hubmeier and others. Baptism was to them a confession of man, in which he shows his obedience to Christ's command. The Baptism of children who have no understanding of the significance of the ceremony was to them absurd, both unprofitable and superfluous.¹³⁶ Their successors are the **Mennonites** (purified from many of the extravagancies of the Anabaptists of the Reformation time by Menno Simons), with the same opposition to infant Baptism. The **Baptists** of England and America are historically independent from the Anabaptists of the Reformation time; they have come into existence as a culmination in the development of the English Independents through Mennonite influences. The Congregationalists, in opposition to those holding to the Episcopalian and to the Presbyterian views of church government, had declared the local congregation as the unit of the Church's existence; now the Baptists went a step further and made the individual Christian that unit, with which would consistently agree the doctrine that he must first decide for himself and then receive Baptism. To **Zwingli**, Baptism was a mere symbol, a badge of membership, through which the Christian engages himself to Christ. By thus depreciating Baptism, and saying that even children should thus be initiated, he hoped to sweep away the foundations of the Anabaptist party.¹³⁷

136. See the description of their teachings in Plitt, II, 261 ff.

137. Seeberg, *History of Doctr.* II, 316.

In general we can say: All Protestant denominations outside of the Lutheran Church and a part of the Episcopalian Church can see in Baptism no means of creating a new spiritual life. Baptism is to them **only a symbol of regeneration**. It does not work the forgiveness of sins or receive into the Kingdom of God, but is merely an illustration of how God will wash man's sins away. Some may speak of Baptism as a seal of the forgiveness of sins, but it is a forgiveness which is received independent of Baptism. To all these, Baptism is no real means of grace, no means through which God communicates His grace to man.

ARTICLE TEN

Of the Lord's Supper

Of the Supper of the Lord, they teach, that the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present, and are distributed to those who eat in the Supper of the Lord; and they disapprove of those that teach otherwise.

De coena Domini docent, quod corpus et sanguis Christi vere adsint et distribuantur vescentibus in coena Domini; et improbant secus docentes.

Here again, as in Art. IX, we have a most important and much-discussed doctrine treated in just a few statements. The confessional literature on this subject is great. For a full treatment of this article the doctrinal history is constantly to be kept in view. Our discussion can only be brief. We need for it the German text of the Augsburg Confession, with the Latin (of which our English text is a translation); and the brief article in the Apology as the authentic interpretation of the Augustana; also the respective parts in both

catechisms of Luther, and the Smalcald Articles. Article VII of the Formula of Concord, in both the Epitome and the Solid Declaration, is the most illuminating and comprehensive treatment of the Lord's Supper that has ever been written. We can only occasionally refer to it. It should be studied connectedly by every Lutheran minister.

1. What is the **Sacramental Gift** in the Lord's Supper?

The Reformed churches say: **Spiritual influences** from the exalted Christ for the truly believing. If this were all, there would be no essential difference between a common religious service or a prayer-meeting and the Communion. In both cases the heavenly gift consists of spiritual influences which must be received by a special exercise of faith.

Others stress so much the presence of Christ as person that again the distinction between the general presence and the sacramental presence disappears. Thus the difference between Calvin and Luther is ignored. But in the New Testament we read four times, in every one of the records containing the institution of the Holy Supper, namely, in Matthew, Mark, Luke and St. Paul: "This is my body."¹³⁸

Our article interprets the words used by Christ himself, when it reads: "The **body and blood of Christ** are truly present." So did also the tenth of the Schwabach Articles, with the

138. There is a slight difference in the reports only in this that Matthew and Mark say: "This is my blood of the New Testament", while Luke and Paul say: "This cup is the new Testament in my blood".

words: "*der wahre Leib und Blut Christi.*" In his Small Catechism Luther had already expressed himself in the following way: "It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, given unto us Christians to eat and to drink, as it was instituted by Christ Himself." And in the Apology Melancthon says: "In the Lord's Supper the body and blood of Christ are truly and substantially present" (p. 174, 54).

So we see with what painstaking care our Confessions adhere to **the principle of realism** in interpreting the words of institution, for which Luther stood so unwaveringly during the eucharistic controversies. For the purpose of leaving to the Sacramentarians no loophole, he wrote in the Smalcald Articles: "Of the Sacrament of the Altar we hold that bread and wine in the Supper *are* the true body and blood of Christ."¹³⁹ **The Formula of Concord** sided with Luther as quoted in the Epitome, "that, on account of the sacramental union the bread and wine are truly the body and blood of Christ" (pp. 511, 7; 501, 14). The seemingly offensive meaning of these expressions are explained in another place in the Formula of Concord: "When the bread is offered the body of Christ is at the same time present, and is truly tendered" (p. 603, 14).

139. Part III, Art. VI. Luther had first written, in consonance with the Wittenberg Concord: "that under bread and wine there be the true body and blood of Christ in the supper". But he deliberately changed it to the present form, to the displeasure of Melancthon, Philip of Hessa and the South Germans at the convention of Smalcald in 1537. See the historical account of this book, in the introduction to the Smalcald Articles, section 4.

2. Can we be sure that the Roman Doctrine of Transubstantiation is excluded from the Conception of the Lutheran Confessions?

Luther had already abandoned his belief in the theory of transubstantiation when he wrote on the Babylonian captivity of the Church (1520). However, he was never much interested in the mode of Real Presence. But he looked upon transubstantiation as a "sophistical subtlety," with no foundation in the Scriptures.¹⁴⁰ He had been especially outspoken in his writing against Henry VIII. (Erl. Ed., 420 ff., 428).

But what is, historically, the meaning of the words in our **Art. X** (Latin text, of which our English is a translation)? Judging from the contemporaneous **German Text** — which approaches the phraseology on the Lord's Supper as accepted at the Lateran Council in 1215¹⁴¹ — Melanchthon at least left the impression that transubstantiation is to be taught. This impression is strengthened by the quotation, in the first edition of the Apology, of "Vulgarius" (Theophylact), who says that "*bread is not a mere figure, but is truly changed into flesh*" (Art. X. 54). But it is of interest to observe that in the edition of 1531 (octavo edition) Melanchthon removed that quotation.¹⁴² For a full understanding of the Lutheran teaching in this respect the other Con-

140. Smalcald Articles, p. 331.

141. Melanchthon did not really want to teach transubstantiation, he simply reveals the diplomatic trait of which we spoke p. 141.

142. Bullinger had criticized Melanchthon because of this quotation. See Bindseil, Mel. Epp., p. 431.

fessions of the Lutheran Church, especially Art. VII of the Formula of Concord, must be consulted.

3. The Sacramental Union.

When we reject the Roman theory of a transubstantiation, and yet insist on the words of our article, "that the body and blood of Christ are truly present and are distributed," then the question forces itself upon us: What is **the relation of the two elements** (the earthly: bread and wine, and the heavenly: body and blood of Christ) to each other? Is it perhaps an *impanation*, so that the body is locally included in the bread? This is rejected in the Formula of Concord (603, 14). Or is it a *consubstantiation*? If by this term we are to understand the creation of a third substance (*tertium quid*) out of the two substances (bread and wine on the one hand, body and blood on the other), then the Lutheran Church also rejects consubstantiation. This is implied in the whole manner in which the Formula of Concord treats of the *sacramental union* (607 ff), by which our Confessions simply understand that in the Holy Supper the earthly elements (bread and wine) remain what they are, retaining not only their color, taste, odor, but their very substance, and the heavenly elements (body and blood of Christ) also remain what they are; but that during the celebration of the Communion after the commandment of Christ, there exists between the two elements such a relation that where the bread is there is also the body, where the wine is there is also the blood of Christ, and, as our article says, "both are distributed to those who eat in the Supper of the Lord." This sacramental union which is characterized by the use of the three

prepositions *in*, *with* and *under*, is a mystery, comparable to the union between the two natures in Christ, as is pointed out in the Formula of Concord. Only instead of a personal union it is a sacramental union.¹⁴³

Note 1. Luther, with his doctrine of a sacramental union in connection with the "*in*, *with* and *under*," has had precursors in the history of doctrines. **Duns Scotus**, who defended transubstantiation, already suggested that after the creation of the body of Christ not merely the accidents (color, taste, etc.), but also the substance of the bread is retained. **William Occam**, in his *De Sacramento Altaris*, was ready to reject transubstantiation as not taught in the Scriptures, and he suggested that in the Supper the body of Christ *coexists with* the substance of the bread. Luther was thoroughly familiar with the work of Occam, and the manner in which he classifies the modes of spacial existence and the superspacial existence of the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper and in all existing things,¹⁴⁴ points to the fact that he was influenced by Occam. Yet there is a profound difference between this philosopher of nominalism, to whom the body of Christ is nothing but a philosophical conception, and Luther who, on the basis of the Scriptures, defends the religious idea that the historical Christ as our Savior is Himself present in the Supper for the purpose of communicating His glorified humanity as a pledge and a seal for the forgiveness of sins.¹⁴⁵

Note 2. In the above we have disclaimed consubstantiation for the Lutheran Church. We must, however, remember that the term consubstantiation has been used by the theological writers of our Church with a twofold meaning.

143. F. C., Solid Declaration, p. 607 ff. For a comprehensive discussion of the problems in the teaching on the Lord's Supper, see the writer's book "The Lutherans in the Movements for Church Union" (1921), pp. 162-69; 183-87.

144. See Formula of Concord, p. 619.

145. Seeberg, *History of Doctrines*, II, pp. 203-5; 326-27. A new edition of the *De Sacramento Altaris* of Occam, which has become very rare, with introduction and explanatory notes, is about to be published by Rev. Bruce T. Birch, Ph. D., Professor of Philosophy in Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio.

In the sense in which we have taken it in the above discussion, as a *commixtio* of the substances for the creation of a *tertium quid*, our Church rejects it.¹⁴⁶ But the Lutheran doctrine of the sacramental union, as we have described it on the basis of our Confessions, has sometimes also been called a consubstantiation. If this term is meant to express the doctrine that in the Holy Supper the glorified body of Christ is present with the bread and that when the one is distributed, the other, as being in a mysterious union therewith, is actually received—then our Church accepts such “consubstantiation.” (See C. Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, III, 672).

4. Oral Eating and Drinking is not accepted by all Lutherans, but it is consistent with the Real Presence and the sacramental union. The **Formula of Concord** says: “We believe, teach and confess that the body and blood of Christ are received with the bread and wine, not only spiritually by faith but also orally; yet not in a Capernaitic, but in a supernatural, heavenly mode, because of the sacramental union” (512, 15; 613, 63). It **follows from the text of the Augsburg Confession**: “The body and blood of Christ are *truly present* and are *distributed* to those *who eat* in the Supper of our Lord.

There is even a **religious interest** in this statement of the way in which the communicant comes into contact with the body and blood of Christ as a pledge and a seal for the forgiveness of sins. We need not secure the communion with Christ by drawing Him down from heaven through our faith; He is present at the communion. And not

146. It was for the first time advanced by John of Paris (about 1300), a contemporary of Duns Scotus: The substance of the bread combines with the body of Christ to form one “subsistence”, so that there are indeed two corporeities, but only one body. *Vide* Seeberg, *Hist. of Doctr.*, II, 203, footnote 2.

only according to His divinity, but according to His whole person as God and man. We need not lift ourselves up by a strong faith to the right hand of God in order there to participate in Christ's body which, according to Calvin, is confined to a certain place in heaven; no, Christ's humanity has been glorified, it is omnipresent with His divinity, and, therefore, His body and blood are "truly present" in the Supper. So our article can speak of a distributing and an eating. It is through an eating and drinking that we receive the body and blood of Christ in the communion.

Yet the eating and the drinking of the heavenly elements does not take place in the same manner as that of bread and wine. **It is supernatural,** in a way that "man's sense and reason do not comprehend." It is not a Capernaitic eating and drinking,¹⁴⁷ "as though His flesh were rent with the teeth, and digested like other food." "This," the Formula of Concord complains, is a doctrine "which the Sacramentarians, against the testimony of their conscience, after all our frequent protests, wilfully force upon us, and in this way make our doctrine odious to their hearers."¹⁴⁸

5. A most essential part of the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper is contained in Art. XIII and must be considered here for the sake of completeness. It is a sacrament, that is, a divinely instituted rite through which God gives us heavenly gifts. This is expressed in the words

147. The term Capernaitic is derived from John 6:26, 52.

148. Vide Formula of Concord, p. 512 (15); 515 (41 ff.); 519 (17); 612 (61 ff.); 620 (105).

“but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them.” This holy rite is a most solemn assurance on the part of God that Christ gave His body and shed His blood for every sinner that receives these elements and that He will save him in time and eternity.

Here was the fundamental difference of Zwingli and Calvin from Luther. How could they accept such a doctrine? If (according to their preconceived ideas) God would do this, then He would assure those of His divine grace and of the salvation prepared also for them, whom He never intended to save, but to reject. In other words: He would deceive and lie to all except the very few individuals chosen in preference to others. They either had to accept the doctrine of universal grace or reject Luther’s doctrine of the real presence as a seal and actual assurance of God’s mercy and grace to every individual that approached the altar. If they accepted Luther’s doctrine — which was none other than that of Christ and St. Paul — they must abandon their whole theology, which was a unit no less than that of Luther. No wonder that Zwingli soon after the Marburg Colloquy withdrew his signature to that document in which he had accepted Luther’s doctrine in all points except that of real presence.

If the Lord’s Supper is a sacrament or divine act of grace then it is not essential for its reality whether men accept this grace or reject it. Christ’s body and blood is present and is received wherever this bread and wine is received because Christ instituted this holy rite. It is as with the

word of the Gospel which is ever true and offers God's grace to all that hear it, — whether they accept or refuse it. So the same grace is offered to man also in this form of the Gospel.

But the **benefit** intended to be brought by this holy rite requires **faith**. Only if the grace of God is received and accepted we receive its blessing. Only if the participant is a contrite sinner who longs for Christ as his Savior this solemn assurance of God's grace offered to him in this most personal manner ("offered and set forth through the Sacraments," Art. XIII) will "confirm faith in those that use them" (Art. XIII). The others reject the grace of God affirmed to them in this most personal manner and thereby accumulate sin upon sin by their unbelief.

There can be nothing more comforting and blessed to the troubled soul and the contrite sinner than this assurance of the universal Gospel brought home to him personally and sealed by the precious body and blood by which he was redeemed.

7. The "Variata" of 1540. After the first authorized text of our Confession, the so-called *Editio Princeps*, had appeared (1531), Melanchthon amended the text with every new edition. This was in itself not out of the ordinary. Luther's first publication of the Smalcald Articles, as compared with the document that was signed by the theologians, also contains changes.¹⁴⁹ But the Variata edition of the Augsburg Confession lost favor, because the changes, especially in Article X, became the shibboleth for crypto-calvinistic tendencies in

149. See our introduction to the Smalcald Articles, section 7.

the Lutheran Church. We will be able to see the significance of the changes by presenting a **parallel exhibition** of the two texts of the article with the omitted phrases of the received text ("Invariata") in italics:

"INVARIATA"

De coena Domini docent,
quod corpus et sanguis
Christi *vere adsint* et *dis-*
tribuantur vescentibus in
coena Domini, *et improbant*
secus docentes.

"VARIATA"

De coena Domini docent,
quod *cum* pane et vino *ex-*
hibeantur corpus et sanguis
Christi vescentibus in coena
Domini.

"WITTENBERG CONCORD 1537"

"... tamen concedunt sacramentali unione panem
esse corpus Christi, hoc est, porrecto pane sentiunt simul
adesse et vere exhiberi corpus Christ."

These two very important phrases of the received text **were omitted** in the edition of 1540: the *vere adsint* (truly present) and the *improbant secus docentes* (we disapprove of those who teach otherwise). In addition to that, for *distribuantur* is substituted the word *exhibeantur*.

a. The wording of the article in the Variata is such that **transubstantiation is clearly excluded**. In 1530 at Augsburg there still was hope of winning the emperor and the German princes over to the position of the Lutherans and of persuading them that the Lutheran position was that of the old Catholic Church; but now, ten years later, that hope no longer existed, and thus there was no need of employing expressions on the Lord's Supper that were pleasing to Rome. The Confutation had approved of Art. X in the form in which it was delivered at Augsburg; but Dr. Eck pro-

tested against the form of this article in the Variata at the colloquy in Worms, 1540.¹⁵⁰

b. But, on the other hand, it is evident from the reading of the article in the Variata that Melanchthon was striving to give to Art. X a wording that might satisfy and **win over the Zwinglians**, who were now, after the death of Zwingli in the battle of Cappel (1531), without a leader. The danger of an invasion of Germany by Zwinglianism seemed to be gone. In many of the actions of Melanchthon at Augsburg (1530) there was much diplomacy. There he was unwilling to listen for a moment to the request of Philip of Hessa and Martin Bucer to remove the two objectionable phrases: *truly present* and *we disapprove of those who teach otherwise*. It would have endangered his plans of winning the Romanists. But more and more the diplomatic trait in Melanchthon begins to exercise itself in the other direction. How fine if all German Protestants could be united upon a phraseology in Art. X, which is Lutheran and yet does offend neither the Zwinglians nor that mediating type of theology, represented by Bucer and soon also by Calvin!¹⁵¹ Bucer of Strassburg was untiring in his efforts to bring about a union between the Lutherans and Reformed. The Wittenberg Concord was formulated (1536), with the hope of gradually bringing about the desired union. Luther approved of it. He himself wrote the Wittenberg Concord. In this document we have

150. Kurtz, *Kirchengeschichte*, 14th ed., p. 137, 2. Weber, *Krit. Gesch.*

151. We remember that the South German cities because of their disagreement with the Lutherans, handed their own Confession, the "*Tetrapolitana*," to the emperor at Augsburg.

the word *exhibeantur* in place of the *distribuantur* in the Augustana. It was a period in the history of the Reformation when Luther went very far in meeting the Zwinglians, in the hope that they would gradually adopt his conception of the Lord's Supper.¹⁵² If we keep in mind that the publication of the Variata fell in a time of such peaceful sentiments towards the Zwinglians, we can understand why the appearance of this edition of the Augustana was not accompanied by utterances of protest on the part of Luther and his followers. The question whether Melancthon had changed his views on the Lord's Supper has been much discussed. Kurtz suggests that, while he did not himself reject the Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence, yet he had lost the appreciation of the difference between Luther and Calvin.¹⁵³ We cannot say that the language of Art. X in the Variata introduces a new doctrine of the Lord's Supper, but the Lutheran doctrine is expressed so indefinitely, so vaguely, that a basis for cooperation with the Swiss

152. Here is of special interest a letter which Luther wrote, under date of December 1st, 1537, to the followers of Zwingli in Zurich. It was an answer to a letter received from them, in which they had emphasized their conception of a merely spiritual presence in the Eucharist. In this letter Luther prays to God that he might be permitted to complete the work of reconciliation begun in the Wittenberg Concord, and he asks them to work for the same end. For himself and his friends he promises that in writing and preaching they would be quiet and mild, in order not to interfere with the development. And, referring to the difference in the doctrine of the Sacrament, he wrote: "Since we do not yet understand each other fully, it is well to exercise mutual kindness, and always hope the best until all turbid waters have fully settled". The letter of the Swiss is found in Hospinian II, p. 151; and in Ender's *Briefwechsel* XI, 157 ff. Luther's answer (Latin) is contained in the same book, p. 157; German in the *Historie des Sakramentsstreits*, p. 400; in Ender's XI, 294; in *Erl. Ed.* of Luther's works LV, 190. Extracts of both letters in Koestlin-Kawerau, *Leben Luther's* (4th ed.), pp. 350 and 352. Compare Planck III, Book 8, p. 399 ff.

153. *Church History* (14th ed.), p. 161-9.

theologians is established. Planck says: "Melancthon made these changes in order to make it possible for the Reformed to accept the Augsburg Confession without sacrificing their doctrine of the Lord's Supper. This cannot be denied; it should never have been denied."¹⁵⁴

c) While at first there was among the Lutherans themselves no objection to this article of the Variata, yet later, when Calvinism entered upon an aggressive propaganda in Germany, and when it was found that the invaders made the Variata their shibboleth, **this edition of the Augsburg Confession came into disfavor** in the Lutheran Church, and the Book of Concord decided in favor of the first authorized publication of the Confession, the *Editio Princeps*, which has been called the "*Invariata*." This has been discussed more at length in our introduction to the Augsburg Confession (cf. p. 91 ff.).¹⁵⁵

8. Supplementary Thoughts from the Second Part of our Confession.

a. **Article XXII** insists that both kinds should be given in the Lord's Supper; that **the withdrawing of the cup** from the laity is in conflict with the words of Christ, who said (Matth. 26:27): "Drink ye all of it" in conflict also with the practice of the Apostolic church (1 Cor. 10:16; 11:26-28); also with the practice of the succeeding periods as shown by the testimony of the

154. *Geschichte der Entstehung des protestantischen Lehrbegriffs* IV, Book 1, pp. 12, 14.

155. For a still more detailed discussion of this whole question compare J. L. Neve, "Are We Justified in Distinguishing Between an Altered and an Unaltered Augustana as the Confession of the Lutheran Church." Published by the Lutheran Literary Board, Burlington, Iowa.

fathers. The Apology, in the corresponding article, adds that the only ground for this departure is human preference and priestly ambition. Pope Gelasius (492-96), writing against this practice among the Manichæans, calls such division of the Sacrament a sacrilege. The statement of Nic. Cusanus (d. 1464) that the Lateran council (1215) introduced this practice, is not correct; it was done at the Synods of Constance (1415) and Basle (1434) against the Hussites. The Lutherans also declared that they had abandoned the **Corpus Christi procession**. The real reason for this (not mentioned here) was the doctrinal conception of our Church that there is a sacramental union and a Real Presence in the Lord's Supper only *during the administration*. Besides, the *Corpus Christi* procession pre-supposes the transubstantiation theory. On this the Formula of Concord has a deliverance on page 621 (108).

b. **Article XXIV** on the Mass, in Confession and Apology, expresses the following thoughts: The Lutherans have **not abolished the mass**, by which is here meant the communion service. In their celebration of the Lord's Supper, however, they use **the language of the people** (German) in place of the Latin. They celebrate it together **as a congregation**; admitting none that have not been **proved** (*nisi antea explorati*); they are also **taught** concerning the meaning of the Sacrament. They abhor the masses for gain, and therefore have entirely abandoned the **private masses** which have been especially conducted for lucre's sake. A theory which the Lutherans have been in conscience compelled to abandon is that the mass

is a **continued sacrifice** for sin. The **distinction between Sacrament and sacrifice** is pointed out. The Lord's Supper is a Sacrament in which God gives to man, not a sacrifice in the sense of the Roman Church (man offering sacrifices to God). Christ is the only sacrifice presented once for all. In one respect only the Lord's Supper may be called a sacrifice: It is the **Eucharist** in which we offer our gratitude to God for His sacrifice upon Calvary.

ARTICLE ELEVEN

Of Confession

Of Confession, they teach, that Private Absolution ought to be retained in the churches, although in confession an enumeration of all sins is not necessary. For it is impossible, according to the Psalm: "Who can understand his errors?" [Ps. 19: 12].

De confessione docent, quod absolutio privata in ecclesiis retinenda sit, quamquam in confessione non sit necessaria omnium delictorum enumeratio. Est enim impossibilis iuxta psalmum: Delicta quis intelligit?

1. On the **relation** between Article XI (of Confession), XII (of Repentance) and XXV (of Confession) Zoeckler, in his book on the Augsburg Confession (p. 234), has a few thoughts of interest: Article XII tells us what repentance is, describing it as an inner process in man's heart; Article XI deals with the outward administration of repentance from the standpoint of the Church; Article XXV repeats the essential parts of both articles and adds some testimonies of the ancient Church in favor of theory and practice as existing among the Lutherans. These remarks of Zoeckler would suggest that the **better arrangement** would have been to treat first of Repentance and then of

Confession. This Melanchthon did in the Apology, and he also made that change in the Variata of 1540.

2. Auricular Confession is here contrasted with *private* confession. After Peter Lombard had established the doctrine of Auricular Confession with theological arguments, the fourth Lateran Synod, 1215, decreed that at least once during the year all mortal sins of which a person had knowledge should be confessed to the priest. Not only should the sins be mentioned, but the circumstances under which they had been committed were also to be told. With the information thus secured, the priest, as a divine appointed judge, was to say what steps were to be taken to secure the divine forgiveness. This practice helped much in the direction of making the laity dependent upon the hierarchy.

3. Why does our Article reject Auricular Confession? We shall answer this question on the basis of the Augustana and the Apology.

a. **"An enumeration of all sins is not necessary."** It is not commanded in the Scriptures. Confession is to be made to God, but not necessarily to the priest. The priest has not been appointed by God as a judge over the consciences of men. "Ministers in the Church . . . have not the command to investigate secret sins" (Apology, p. 196, 7).

b. **"For it is impossible, according to the Psalms: 'who can understand his errors'?"** (Ps. 19:12). We can **easily deceive ourselves** in judging the nature of our own sins. In Jer. 17:9 we read: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and

desperately wicked: who can know it?" Neither will it be possible for us always to **distinguish between "mortal" and "venial" sins**. We cannot accept the artificial distinction of the Roman Church which names seven mortal sins. *Every sin committed by the unregenerated and by him who is not justified is a mortal sin, and all sins in the regenerated, which do away with and nullify justification are mortal sins.* An attempt, therefore, at enumerating the mortal sins before a priest will easily be a deceptive practice.

c. The **Romanists** said in the Confutation that "a full confession is necessary for salvation." But the **Lutherans**, while approving of confession, contended that such demand would mean "*snarcs cast upon consciences*, which never will be tranquil, if they think that they cannot obtain the remission of sins, unless this precise enumeration be made." "For when will the conscience be sure that the confession is full," Apology, pp. 197, 13; 198, 14.

d. Back of the distinction between *publicly* confessed sins to be forgiven and other sins not to be forgiven stands the old Pelagian error of **ignoring the organic relation of all sin**, of taking sins as a heap of stones. It is the failure of seeing the essence of sin in a condition. Our article in the Augustana does not touch upon this point, but that there was a fundamental difference between the Lutherans and the Romanists can be seen from the writing of Melanchthon in the Apology, especially in Art. II.¹⁵⁶

156. Compare Zoeckler, p. 234. See our discussion in Art. II.

4. Private Absolution is *different from auricular confession* in that there is no insistence upon an enumeration of all sins, but it is *different also from the general confession* and absolution which takes place at the preparation of the congregation for the Lord's Supper. *In private absolution* an individual, feeling the burden of special sins or his general sinfulness, comes of his own free will to his pastor seeking spiritual comfort. And the pastor, fully conscious that he has "not the command to investigate secret sins" (Apol., p. 196), pronounces to him individually the forgiveness of sins. Melancthon says in the Apology (p. 196): "It would be wicked to remove private absolution from the Church."

5. Is Private Confession Compulsory?

a. The **Scriptures** teach in many places that we must confess our sins (1 John 1:9; Prov. 28:13; Ps. 51), but there is no command that confession must be made to the spiritual leader of the congregation, as a condition for the forgiveness of sins.

b. **Luther**, who put a very high estimate upon private confession, took the position that it must not be made compulsory, that we may confess to whomsoever we will, that the all-important matter is that we confess to God.¹⁵⁷ R. Seeberg says: "From this position Luther never wavered, although he always warmly recommended voluntary private confession."¹⁵⁸

157. This is also the demand of Art. XXV, in its last paragraph, p. 53, 10-13.

158. *History of Doctrines* II, 240. Comp. in *Luther's works*, Erl. ed., vol. 28, pp. 248-50, 308; vol. 29, p. 353; vol. 10, 401; vol. 23, p. 68.

c. **Our article** says with precaution "that private absolution *ought to be* retained in the churches." That compulsion is here not intended we see from the following words of the **Schwabach Articles**: "Private confession should not be forced with laws." And in the eleventh of the **Marburg Articles**, written by Luther, we read that "confession, or the seeking of counsel from the pastor or a friend (*Naechste*), should not be forced, but free." Since these articles were the sources which Melancthon used when writing the Augsburg Confession, they are suggestive in the interpretation of the article under consideration.

6. **Why was Private Absolution retained in the Church?** Our Reformers looked upon this institution as a valuable means of imparting **needed instruction** to the souls at moments when these were receptive for divine truth. In the Apology we read the words: "In order that men may be better instructed." Again: "For we also retain confession, especially on account of the absolution, which is the Word of God, that, by divine authority, the power of the keys proclaims concerning individuals" (pp. 197, 196). Here we may also quote as pertinent a sentence from the German article (XXIV) on the Mass in the Augustana: *Daneben geschieht auch Unterricht wider andere unrechte Lehre vom Sakrament.* Such private confession would mostly take place at times preceding the communion, and here the minister would speak of erroneous teaching on the Sacrament. But the **chief object** for retaining private absolution in the Church was that the souls in contrition under the "terrors smiting the

conscience" (Art. XII) might unburden themselves and be comforted.

Note: For the administration of this institution the Church needs ministers of the right kind. The question is—as Origen said already at the beginning of the third century—whether “high priest-like personalities can be found, merciful as Christ and the Apostles.”¹⁵⁹ The minister must be a real spiritual leader. But no matter how much spiritual influence he has over the individuals, he must take care not to let such private absolution degenerate into the auricular confession of the Roman Church. The minister must remember that it is not within his rights to ask impertinent questions in the manner of the Roman Catholic priest. The above quoted words of the Apology must ever be kept in mind: “They (the ministers) have not ~~the~~ command to investigate secret sins.” As far as *duty* goes, the soul needs to confess to God alone. Only it is the *privilege* of those with a troubled conscience to make use of the office of the ministry for counsel and assurance of divine grace.

ARTICLE TWELVE

Of Repentance

Of Repentance, they teach, that for those that have fallen after Baptism, there is remission of sins whenever they are converted; and that the Church ought to impart absolution to those thus returning to repentance.

Now repentance consists properly of those two parts: One is contrition, that is, terrors smiting the conscience through the knowledge of sin; the other is faith, which, born of the Gospel, or of absolution, believes that, for

De poenitentia docent, quod lapsis post baptismum contingere possit remissio peccatorum quocunque tempore, quum convertuntur, et quod ecclesia talibus redeuntibus ad poenitentiam absolutionem impertiri debeat. Constat autem poenitentia proprie his duabus partibus: Altera est contritio seu terrores incussi conscientiae agnito peccato; altera est fides, quae concipitur ex evangelio seu absolutione, et credit propter Christum re-

159. Seeberg, *History of Doctrines* I, § 15.

Christ's sake, sins are forgiven, comforts the conscience, and delivers it from terrors. Then good works are bound to follow, which are the fruits of repentance.

They condemn the *Anabaptists*, who deny that those once justified can lose the Holy Ghost. Also those who contend that some may attain to such perfection in this life that they cannot sin. The *Novatians* also are condemned, who would not absolve such as had fallen after Baptism, though they returned to repentance. They also are rejected who do not teach that remission of sins cometh through faith, but command us to merit grace through satisfactions of our own.

mitti peccata, et consolatur conscientiam et ex terroribus liberat. Deinde sequi debent bona opera, quae sunt fructus poenitentiae.

Damnant Anabaptistas, qui negant semel iustificatos posse amittere Spiritum Sanctum; item, qui contendunt, quibusdam tantam perfectionem in hac vita contingere, ut peccare non possint.

Damnantur et Novatiani, qui nolebant absolvere lapsos, post baptismum redeuntes ad poenitentiam.

Reiiciuntur et isti, qui non docent remissionem peccatorum per fidem contingere, sed iubent nos mereri gratiam per satisfactiones nostras.

1. An easy Way of Viewing the whole article is to **begin with** the third paragraph (Eng. text). Here *four special errorists* are enumerated. We have a rejection (1) of the Anabaptists; (2) of the Perfectionists;¹⁶⁰ (3) of the Novatians; (4) of the Romanists. (The last are not mentioned by name, but are obviously meant.) **Then we turn to** the two preceding paragraphs of our article. The first we may mark with "ad 3," and the second with

160. These are not given under this special name. Perfectionism was one error of the Anabaptists, and therefore some interpreters of the Augsburg Confession (Zoeckler, for instance) speak only of three kinds of errorists enumerated in this closing paragraph. But we prefer to count the Perfectionists as a special class, because of the following which this particular error has had among Protestant denominations.

"ad 4." In the first paragraph the positive doctrine of our Lutheran Church against the *Noratians* is offered, and in the second we have the doctrine of repentance as opposed to the *Romanists*.

2. Can those once Justified lose the Holy Ghost? This was denied by the *Anabaptists*. The *Schwenkfeldians* at the time of the Reformation took the same position. The **strict Calvinists** also deny that he who has been justified can fall from grace. He may fall into sins, offend the Holy Spirit, wound his conscience and lose the feeling of grace *for a time* (Synod of Dort), but he cannot fall forever. This is in harmony with the doctrine of absolute and unfailing predestination. Such doctrine is clearly against the teaching of the Scriptures: (Matth. 26:41; 1 Peter 5:8; 1 Cor. 10:12; Gal. 5:4; 1 John 1:8). **Luther** writes with much emphasis against this doctrine in the *Smalcad Articles* (p. 329, 42-45). The *Formula of Concord* rejects the "false Epicurean delusion . . . that faith and the righteousness and salvation received can be lost through no sins or wicked deeds, even though wilful and intentional, but that even if a Christian without fear and shame indulge his wicked lusts, resist the Holy Ghost, and intentionally acquiesce in sins against conscience, yet he none the less retains faith, God's grace, righteousness and salvation" (p. 586).

3. The Perfectionists contend "that some may attain to such perfection in this life that they cannot sin." This was one of the errors taught by the **Anabaptists**. But the **Romanists**, being Semipelagians in doctrine taught the same, when, at the Council of Trent, they confirmed the teaching that the justified can perfectly obey the divine

commandments. The possibility of Christian perfection, of sinlessness, has become the favorite doctrine of many of the **later denominations** which have sprung from the Reformed Church: the Arminians, the Quakers, the Methodists (the holiness people of many names). The so-called Oxford movement (Pearsall Smith), which has had a following also in Germany, stood for this doctrine. Some say that after conversion a second religious experience is to follow, which will lead to perfect holiness. This is against the testimony of **Scripture**: Luke 17:10; Phil. 3:12. In 1 John 1:8 we read: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Here the perfectionists interpret as follows: While we may *have* sin, yet we need not *commit* sin; to have sin and to commit sin are two different things. Let us add a few utterances from the Confessions. **Luther** says: "in which Christian Church he *daily* forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers."¹⁶¹ The corresponding part in the Large Catechism has these words: "For now we are only half pure and holy, so that the Holy Ghost has ever to continue His work in us through the Word, and daily to dispense forgiveness, until we attain to that life where there will be no more forgiveness, but only perfectly pure and holy people," etc. (p. 446, 58). In the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer we find the phrase: "although we daily commit much sin." On the same point in the Large Catechism: "For we stumble daily and transgress, because we live in the world, among men who do us great wrong

161. Explanation of the third article of the Apostles' Creed in the Small Catechism, p. 368.

and give us cause for impatience, anger, revenge, etc. And, besides, we have Satan at our back, who attacks us on every side . . . so that it is not possible to stand always firm in such a persistent conflict" (p. 461). In the **Formula of Concord** we read: "For although they are regenerated and renewed in the spirit of their mind, yet, in the present life, this regeneration and renewal are not complete, but are only begun, and believers are, in the spirit of their mind, in a constant struggle against their flesh, i. e., against the corrupt nature and disposition which cleaves to us unto death."¹⁶²

4. **The Novatians** were a sect of the early Church who "*would not absolve such as had fallen after Baptism, though they returned to repentance.*" They stood for the absolute purity of the Church. If Christians, after Baptism, had fallen into grave sins, they were to be excommunicated and not to be admitted again even upon repentance. They were left to the mercy of God, but the Church should not defile itself by granting them restoration. It is **Scriptural** to exclude from Church membership those that are living in grave sins and are impenitent (1 Cor. 5:4; 5:11-13). But the **object** is the healing of the one who has fallen. Therefore our article says "*that for those that have fallen after Baptism, there is remission of sins whenever they are converted; and that the Church ought to impart absolution to those thus returning to repentance.*" This is plainly taught in the Scrip-

162. Epitome, p. 509. Compare also Solid Declaration, p. 542, 14; p. 565, 68, 84; p. 573, 23; p. 596, 7; p. 598, 21. See also Apology, p. 133, 149; p. 139, 172.

tures (1 John 1:7; Matth. 11:28; John 6:7; 2 Peter 3:9). The Church has **no right** to keep the weak out of the communion of believers and exclude them from the Sacrament of the Altar, which was instituted as a means of grace for those in need of grace. Dr. F. Pieper says beautifully: "If a sinner repents truly and desires admission into the Christian Church, the congregation has no right to deny absolution, even if he should have made himself guilty of the most heinous sin, and if there should be reason to fear that the hypocritical, self-righteous world will deride the congregation. Our Lord Christ was not ashamed of the thief on the cross." (Das Grundbekenntniss, page 27).

5. Against the Roman Catholic Church the closing sentence of our article is directed: "*They also are rejected who do not teach that remission of sins cometh through faith, but command us to merit grace through satisfactions of our own.*" To the Romanists repentance is chiefly **penance**, the doing of certain things by which an equivalent for the wrong committed is offered to God. So grace is merited. This is the very perversion of grace which, as we saw in Art. IV, is justification as an imputed righteousness given freely for Christ's sake through faith. According to Roman Catholic theology, **repentance consists of three parts**: (1) contrition of heart; (2) oral confession; (3) satisfaction through good works. Of these, 2 and 3 are especially important. Oral confession appears as an act in which man humiliates himself, and so is doing something in the direction of meriting grace. The further satisfactions, then, continue and complete this work of meriting the remission

of sins. But such teaching **deprives the penitent sinner of the assurance** of the forgiveness of sins and thus of true comfort. If the genuineness of repentance is to be dependent upon an enumeration of all mortal sins in auricular confession, the penitent sinner will always have to ask: Did I do *all* my duty? Did I mention *all* sins? Furthermore, if works of satisfaction are part of repentance as the condition for the forgiveness of sins, then the person with a troubled conscience will always have to ask: Did I do enough? Were my works sufficient? So then, of the three parts which Romanists enumerate as constituent factors of repentance the **Lutheran Church admits** only the first: contrition.

6. **The Lutheran doctrine of repentance** is stated in the second paragraph of our article: "*Now repentance consists properly of these two parts: One is contrition, that is, terrors smiting the conscience through the knowledge of sin; the other is faith, which, born of the Gospel, or of absolution, believes that, for Christ's sake, sins are forgiven, comforts the conscience and delivers it from terrors. Then good works are bound to follow, which are the fruits of repentance.*" This is the positive doctrine of our Lutheran Confessions on repentance. **Contrition and faith** are the constituent parts of repentance. This is repeated in the Apology (p. 185, 52): "In this manner, Scripture is accustomed to join these two, the terrors and the consolation, in order to teach that in repentance there are these chief members, *contrition and faith that consoles and justifies*. Neither do we see how

the nature of repentance can be presented more clearly and simply."

And yet we have in the Lutheran Church, and in the Confessions on the basis of Scripture, **also a different way of speaking of repentance.** Sometimes contrition by itself is taken as repentance and co-ordinated with faith. This is the case in Mark 1:15 where Christ says: "Repent ye, and believe the Gospel." A like passage is Acts 20:21 "Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Also Luke 24:47 "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name." In these passages, repentance is used in the *narrower sense*, as contrition. To this use of the term repentance the Formula of Concord refers: "But in Mark 1:15, as also elsewhere, where a distinction is made between repentance and remission of sins (Luke 24:46, 47), repentance means to do nothing else than truly acknowledge sins, from the heart to regret them, and to abstain therefrom." (Sol. Decl., p. 590, 8). So then in this article Melanchthon uses the term repentance in the *wider sense* as comprising contrition and faith. Indeed, according to a passage in the Apology (181, 28), and in response to the Confutation, he is even willing to admit the fruits of repentance into the definition of repentance, when he says: "If anyone desire to **add a third**, viz., fruits worthy of repentance, i. e., a change of the entire life and character for the better (German text: good works to follow conversion), we will not make any opposition." Melanchthon here speaks of repentance in the widest sense. At another place

in the Apology (p. 183, 44), he says: "Repentance *or* conversion." For both repentance and conversion include contrition and faith. The difference consists in this, that conversion is the repentance of the sinner by which he becomes a child of God, or the initial repentance; whilst repentance of the one who has become a child of God continues as long as he commits sins, that is, throughout his whole life.

(a) **How is contrition brought about?** Our article simply answers: "through the knowledge of sin." But this knowledge of sin comes through the preaching of **the Law**, says the Formula of Concord in Art. IV on Law and Gospel.

The Law is **defined** as the "divine doctrine, which teaches what is right and pleasing to God, and reproves everything that is sin and contrary to God's will" (Epit., p. 506, 3). The knowledge of sins "proceeds from the Law," "which holds forth our sins and God's wrath"; "it threatens its transgressors with God's wrath and temporal and eternal punishment." According to the words of Luther against the Antinomians: "Everything that reproves sin is and belongs to the Law" (Sol. Decl., p. 506, 4). Even "the preaching of the suffering and death of Christ, the Son of God, is an earnest and terrible proclamation and declaration of God's wrath" (Epit., p. 507, 9). Such preaching is "not properly the preaching of the Gospel, but the preaching of Moses and the Law and therefore a 'strange work' of Christ" (Ibid., p. 508, 10).

So then the knowledge of sin, leading to "contrition, that is, terrors smiting the conscience,"

comes through the Law, be it the commandments and prohibitions of Scripture, or the preaching of Christ's suffering and death, which in this case is not properly the preaching of the Gospel, but the "strange work" of Christ.

(b) **How is faith brought about?** Our article answers: "which, born of the **Gospel, or of absolution**, believes that, for Christ's sake, sins are forgiven."

The source of faith is the **Gospel which is defined** as "such a doctrine as teaches what man who has not observed the Law, and therefore is condemned by it, should believe, viz., that Christ has expiated and made satisfaction for all sins, and, without any merit of theirs, has obtained and acquired forgiveness of sins, righteousness that avails before God, and eternal life" (Epit. 506, 4). The Law is not able to engender faith. It is "a ministration that kills through the letter and preaches condemnation (2 Cor. 3:7), but the Gospel 'is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth' (Rom. 1:16), that preaches righteousness and gives the Spirit (1 Cor. 1:18; Gal. 3:2)" (Sol. Dec. 593, 22).

Of special interest is the phrase in our article: "born of the Gospel *or* **absolution**." (Latin: *fides, quae concipitur ex evangelio seu absolutione*). Absolution appears here as identical with the Gospel. Absolution is the universal Gospel applied to the individual soul by the servant of Christ. Zoeckler even suggests that a climax is intended. The particle "or" (*seu*) is equal to *rather* (*sive magis*.) If this is correct then the thought would be of the Gospel in the form of assurance coming

through the ministry of the Word to the individual repentant sinner.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN

Of the Use of the Sacraments

Of the Use of the Sacraments, they teach, that the Sacraments were ordained, not only to be marks of profession among men, but rather to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them. Wherefore we must so use the Sacraments that faith be added to believe the promises which are offered and set forth through the Sacraments.

They therefore condemn those who teach that the Sacraments justify by the outward act, and do not teach that, in the use of the Sacraments, faith which believes that sins are forgiven, is required.

De usu Sacramentorum docent, quod sacramenta instituta sint, non modo ut sint notae professionis inter homines, sed magis ut sint signa et testimonia voluntatis Dei erga nos, ad excitandam et confirmandam fidem in his, qui utuntur, proposita. Itaque utendum est sacramentis ita, ut fides accedat, quae credat promissionibus, quae per sacramenta exhibentur et ostenduntur.

Damnant igitur illos, qui docent, quod sacramenta ex opere operato iustificent, nec docent fidem requiri in usu sacramentorum, quae credat remitti peccata.

1. **Our Common Ground with Zwingli** is indicated by the introductory remark that the Sacraments are "*marks of profession among men.*" According to Zwingli, the Sacraments were "signs, whereby men may recognize each other," like "the watchword in war," like a "livery" (Apology, p. 213, 1). The Lutherans do not deny that this is one significance of the Sacraments. By using Baptism and the Lord's Supper, men will know each other as

Christians. He who is not baptized and does not go to the Sacrament of the Altar thereby shows that he is not a Christian. This view, then, that the Sacrament is "a mark and testimony of profession, just as a particular shape of hood is the sign of a particular profession" (p. 273, 68), is not at all rejected; but, as Melanchthon continues, "this opinion relates to the outward life, neither does it show the chief use of the things delivered by God; it speaks only of the exercise of love, which men, however profane and worldly, understand; it does not speak of faith, the nature of which few understand."

2. What is the Chief Significance of the Sacraments? We read in **our article**: "Of the use of the Sacraments, they teach, that the Sacraments were ordained, not only (*non modo*) to be marks of profession among men, but rather (*sed magis*) to be signs and testimonies of the will of God toward us, instituted to awaken and confirm faith in those who use them." The **Apology** says (German text, p. 213: They "are *efficacious* signs and sure testimonies"; they "are the signs and seals of the promises" (216, 20); they "are properly signs of the New Testament, and testimonies of grace and the remission of sins" (215, 14); "signs of grace" (273, 69 f.): The **Formula of Concord** adds that grace is offered to all (563, 57); the merit and benefits of Christ are "*offered, presented and distributed* to us through His Word and Sacraments" (652, 16). Again: "Therefore Christ causes the promise of the Gospel to be offered not only in general, but through the Sacraments, which He at-

taches as seals of the promise; He seals and thereby especially confirms it." (656, 37).

Our Augustana text says that the Sacraments are "instituted to *awaken* and *confirm* faith in those who use them." **Baptism**, which is to *awaken* faith, is to us a testimony, a seal and a pledge for the forgiveness of our sins and our regeneration through the Holy Spirit. Through all our life we are to use Baptism for this purpose. The **Sacrament of the Altar** is to *confirm* faith in us and to nourish our spiritual life. But where there is not yet faith it is also to awaken faith, that is, to induce the communicant now to accept the grace of God offered also here. It is testimony, seal and pledge of the closest communion with our Savior, whose Body and Blood we eat and drink for the remission of sins.

3. **What is, therefore, necessary for receiving the Benefits of the Sacraments?** "That faith be added to believe the promises which are offered and set forth through the Sacraments." Let us not overlook that Melanchthon, in this article, thinks chiefly of **Rome** with its external and magic conceptions of the Sacraments, which exclude the ethical elements. Therefore **faith is emphasized**. But by faith **Melanchthon meant** something more than the Romanists did when they spoke of faith. To them faith was merely knowledge of and consent to what the Church teaches. Melanchthon says in the Apology: "And here we speak of *special faith*, which believes the present promise, not only that which in general believes that God exists, but which believes that the remission of sins

is offered. This use of the Sacrament consoles godly and alarmed minds" (216, 21).

Two things must be clearly distinguished in considering the Sacraments: firstly, the reality of the rite, and secondly, the benefit or blessing bestowed and received through this rite. The Sacrament is a Sacrament (that is respectively a washing of regeneration and adoption unto childhood in infant Baptism, and the presentation of the true body and blood of our Lord and Savior) wherever the water or bread and wine are used in obedience to Christ's institution. Man's belief or unbelief makes it as little a means of grace, as faith or unbelief makes the Gospel a power unto salvation. But its full intention is only realized and its full blessing is only received where men realize it as the special form of offering God's grace to the individual. The blessing connected with the Sacrament can be only attained by receiving and accepting the divine declaration of His love and grace towards me, the individual sinner. And this is only another expression for "faith." "Faith is the worship of God which receives the benefits offered by God." "God wishes to be worshipped in this way, that we receive from Him those things which He promises and offers." "Thus He wishes Himself to be worshipped, that from Him we receive benefits, and receive them, too, because of His mercy, and not because of our merits" (Apology, p. 96, 49, 60). So (this is important over against the Reformed idea of the Sacrament) our faith does not make the Sacrament, but it is the hand with which we take and

receive its benefits and blessing which God intends to bestow upon us through its use.

4. Rejection of the *Opus Operatum*. "They therefore condemn those who teach that the Sacraments justify by the outward act," etc. The Sacraments do not justify *ex opere operato*," as we read in the Latin text. This last paragraph of our article was **not in the documents delivered at Augsburg**, but was added by Melanchthon when the first edition for print was prepared. It is not in the German copy, because this dates from a time when the Confession was not fully finished.¹⁶³ This is a very important addition, and can have been omitted in the original text only because of the **conciliatory interests** of Melanchthon at Augsburg. In the **Apology** (216, 18) he speaks out: "Here we condemn the whole crowd of scholastic doctors, who teach that the Sacraments confer grace *ex opere operato*, without a good disposition on the part of the one using them, provided he do not place a hindrance in the way." The **Roman view** is that the Sacraments communicate their benefits to every participant who does not intentionally hinder the operation of grace, faith not being necessary. It is reported that in foreign missionary work, Roman Catholic missionaries have taken children from heathen parents, secretly baptizing them, and then reported them as Christians.

5. Number of Sacraments. It was not clear to our Reformers right at the beginning of the Reformation how many of the seven Roman Sacra-

163. Compare our introduction to the Augsb. Confession, sect. 9, a.

ments they should admit to be Sacraments. In his writing on the **Babylonian Captivity** of the Church (1520), Luther, for the first time, reduced the number of Sacraments to three: Baptism, Absolution and the Lord's Supper.¹⁶⁴ In the **Apology**, Melanchthon defines Sacraments as follows: "*Rites which have the command of God and to which the promise of grace has been added,*" and then he gives that much quoted statement: "Therefore *Baptism, the Lord's Supper and Absolution, which is the Sacrament of repentance, are truly Sacraments*" (p. 213, 3; 214, 4. In his article on Repentance, Melanchthon says: "And absolution properly can be called a Sacrament of Repentance, as also the more learned scholastic theologians speak" (p. 183, 4). But in his **Large Catechism** Luther again speaks in this way: "We have to speak of our two Sacraments, instituted by Christ" (466, 1) And a little later, in the same discussion, he writes: "Here you perceive that Baptism, both in its power and significance, comprehend also the third Sacrament, which has been called repentance, as it is really nothing else than Baptism" (475, 74). The whole arrangement in the **Augsburg Confession** (first, in IX and X, Baptism and Lord's Supper, and then after Confession and Repentance, in XI and XII, our article on the Use of the Sacraments) indicates that here also Absolution was thought of as a Sacrament. The same view is found in **Melanchthon's** Wittenberg Reformation (1545) and in the Leipzig Interim (1548). Joh. Matthesius, in his sermons, mentions this

164. Erl. Ed. vol. 47, p. 82. Comp. Koestlin-Hay, *Theology of Luther*, I, 264, 355, 403 ff. II, 532, 536.

trias many times. It is of interest also that many of the oldest communion cups of the Lutheran Church have engraved upon them the emblems of Baptism, Supper and Absolution. But in the end, the feeling of Luther that Absolution was a constituent part of the two Sacraments has prevailed in the Lutheran Church.

ARTICLE FOURTEEN

Of Ecclesiastical Order

Of Ecclesiastical Order, they teach, that no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments, unless he be regularly called.

De ordine ecclesiastico docent, quod nemo debeat in ecclesia publice docere aut sacramenta administrare, nisi rite vocatus.

1. A Statement against the Enthusiasts.

The Anabaptists, the Socinians and the Quakers were opposed to an appointed public ministry and any set form of worship. The Anabaptists and the Quakers especially held to the view that any one who was moved by the Spirit should have the right to speak and teach in the Church. Their position was that the outward Word, written in the Bible or preached by an appointed ministry, cannot enlighten, convert, sanctify, because the Spirit works directly. So a special ministry was rejected. In connection with this, education was declared to be unnecessary. Against these tendencies the statement of our article is opposed: "*None should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments, unless he be regularly called.*" Without a ministry called in due form (*rite vocatus*) there would be disorder in the Church. The

principle expressed in this brief article is to retain ecclesiastical order, so that everything be done "decently and in order" in the Church (1 Cor. 14:40). Luther says: "If all would run together to baptize the child they would drown it." (*Wenn sie alle wuerden herbei laufen, das Kind zu taufen, dann wuerden sie es ersaufen*).

2. The Constituent Elements and Factors of the "rite vocatus."

(a) The call which is here mentioned is the call from the Church as the congregation of believers using Word and Sacraments. It was necessary to emphasize against the Anabaptists the outward call, and, in addition to that, the Lutherans wanted to vindicate themselves in the eyes of the Romanists, who were watching them with grave suspicion in this point, because of their definition of the Church as being not essentially an outward organization, but the congregation of true believers.

Note: Dr. Jacobs, in his *Summary of Christian Faith*," (p. 426), quotes Gerhard on the inner call in the following words: "We grant that God, by an inner impulse, inspires the purpose to assume the office of the ministry, without regard to its perils and difficulties. To this belongs the secret impulse which leads some to study theology. We grant also that in accepting the holy office, no one should be influenced by avarice or ambition or any vicious desire, but by the sincere love of God and the desire of edifying the Church. If any one be disposed to call these two praiseworthy dispositions 'a secret call,' we do not greatly object. Meanwhile we warn, *first*, that, on account of such inner or secret call, no one ought to assume the duties of the ministry, unless an external and regular call of the Church be added, lest the doors be opened for Anabaptistic confusions and enthusiastic revelations. . . . We warn also, in the *second* place,

that the call of that person does not immediately cease to be a call, whose mind, in undertaking the ministerial office, was perhaps contaminated in the beginning by the taint of ambition or avarice or any other impure motive."

(b) The **emphasis is here laid upon the external call** by the Church, that is, by the congregation of true believers as it of necessity comes into visibility and is known as an organized congregation, or by congregations represented in synod. As to the question how the individual receives the call to the ministry and where the authority is vested, there are **two views**, both of which have eminent advocates in the Lutheran Church. (1) Luther in some statements expressed the so-called *transference theory*: The clerical office rests upon the priesthood of all believers. To all members of the congregation belongs the office of the keys, of administering the Sacraments, of preaching. But not all can preach, and if they could, it would create confusion should all have the right to exercise the clerical functions. Therefore, the individual members of the congregation agree to transfer their rights to one whom they call and who now acts in their place.¹⁶⁵ Dr. Walther, and the Missouri Synod made these views their own. We agree with Dr. Jacobs when he says: "There is no Scriptural foundation for the idea that, simply for the sake of good order, there is a transfer to one congregation."¹⁶⁶ (2) The other view is that the right to call is *not limited to any class* within

165. See Koestlin, *Theology of Luther*, I, 373; II, 543; I, 372, 406; II, 86 f.; 542 f.

166. *Summary of Christian Faith*, p. 424. Dieckhoff, *Luther's Lehre von der Kirchlichen Gewalt*, p. 88 f. Harless, *Kirche und Amt*, § 10-15.

the Church. It belongs neither to the ministry alone, nor to the laity alone; but to both in due order.¹⁶⁷ The church laws stipulate in which way this is to be done. Where the local congregation would act alone, without the aid of the ministry, it would exclude the very persons "whose training and experience best fit them for judging the qualifications of candidates." Then it must be remembered that when an individual is called into the ministry, it should be done in such a manner as may be prescribed by the laws and regulations of the church body. Most regulations rule that in calling a minister into the clerical office there should be the cooperation of the Church at large, by the local congregations represented in synods, composed of both laymen and ministers. The exclusion of the laity would be against Scripture, because the power of the keys is given to the whole Church (Matth. 16:18); the laymen, while needing the support of trained ministers, are nevertheless exhorted to test the teachers (Matth. 7:15; 1 Thess. 5:21; 1 John 4:1); and the example of the Apostolic Church shows that the laity are not to be excluded in the act of calling into the holy office. (Acts 1:23; 6:3; 14:23). Yea, we would even say that under primitive conditions of the Church, in missionary or similar periods, where there is no ministry and where two or three laymen should join as a congregation, they would be fully justified in calling and ordaining a pastor. Melancthon says: "Where there is, therefore, a true Church, the right to elect and to ordain ministers necessarily exists. Just as in a case of necessity even a layman absolves and

167. Dr. Jacobs, *Summary*, p. 427.

becomes the minister and pastor of another; as Augustine narrates the story of two Christians in a ship, one of whom baptized the catchumen, who after baptism, in turn absolved the baptizer."¹⁶⁸ Also in case "the bishops are heretics, or will not ordain suitable persons, the churches are in duty bound before God, according to divine law, to ordain for themselves pastors and ministers."¹⁶⁹

Note 1: As to the cooperation between laity and ministers in calling to the holy office, much has been left to the liberty and experience of the Church. But after the Church has developed a settled practice, born out of the needs of the time and not opposed to Scripture principles, such practice should be observed for the sake of good order (cf. Art. XV).

Note 2: To see the almost absolute necessity of the ministry's cooperation with the laity in calling into the holy office we need only to be reminded of the indispensable education (theological seminary) and examination, which are to take place before the congregation can extend the call. For according to 1 Tim. 3, Tit. 1, 3 ff only a person qualified for the office can be rightly called.

Note 3: The view of how the call is received will influence the estimate of ordination. On the basis of the *transference theory*, ordination will be looked upon as merely and solely the confirmation of the act of transferring in an individual charge the office of the ministry by the many priests to the one. According to the *other view* action of the unit ordination appears as an historically developed liturgical form of the Church for introduction into the ministry as a calling for life of an individual who, by the laity in cooperation with the ministry, has been found to be qualified for this office which he from now on is to exercise not only in the one congregation that has presently called him,

168. Smalcald Articles, Appendix, p. 350. Compare Zoeckler, *Augsb. Conf.*, p. 246.

169. Appendix, p. 350, 72.

170. Compare Geo. J. Fritschel, in J. L. Neve's *Brief History of the Lutheran Church in America*, 2nd ed., pp. 279 ff. and 282 ff.

but in any congregation that in the future might want to call him.¹⁷⁰ The "call" then is the lawful act and the "ordination" the liturgical form of transference.

3. Can the Work of Laymen in the Church be Justified on the basis of our Article? Let us keep as a guide before us the leading thought of our article. It treats of "**ecclesiastical order.**" The object is that everything be done "decently and in order" in the Church (1 Cor. 14:40).

(a) According to the reading of this article, can they who have not been ordained for the ministry *teach in Sunday-schools and conduct devotional services, in Young People's meetings?* Note that it here says "that no one should **publicly** teach in the Church," etc. By this was meant the public teaching of the Word on Sundays in the pulpit. This is a work that shall be left to the regularly called pastor of the congregation or to a person whom he appoints in his place. Sunday-school and the work of special departments in the Church is something altogether different from what is spoken of here.

(b) But an able *layman or a theological student* may in times of vacancy serve even in the pulpit, in the **regular services** of the sanctuary, by reading a sermon or preaching. Only *two things are necessary*: (1) There must be the call for each occasion, and (2) it must not be a permanent matter.¹⁷¹

(c) Our article says "that none should administer the Sacraments, unless he be regularly called." This is a universally acknowledged rule in the Lutheran Church. Deviation from this rule has

171. Comp. Jacobs, Summary, p. 430.

met with decided protest. We call to mind the Waldenstroem movement in the Swedish Church.¹⁷² Yet we have to admit that *in cases of extreme necessity*, a deviation even from this rule is justifiable. In Article IX we spoke of a Baptism by laymen in *agone mortis* (*Nottaufe*). Can we also speak of the **distribution of the Lord's Supper by a layman** as a case of necessity? It must not be left out of consideration that our Confession says of *Baptism only* that it "is necessary to salvation" (Article IX). The same is not said of the Lord's Supper. It is not fundamental for salvation in the same degree as Baptism. But how in a case where the need is felt with great intensity and, in the absence of an ordained minister, a layman is called upon to administer the Sacrament? Perhaps here the above quotation from the Appendix to the Smalcald Articles would apply, of the story narrated by Augustine, of "two Christians in a ship, one of whom baptizes the catchumen, who after Baptism absolved the baptizer."

4. Our article knows nothing of a call becoming valid because of an ordination by a *bishop* (Roman Catholic, Episcopal Churches), or an *Apostle* (Irvingites), or of the necessity of an *Apostolic succession* (the hobby of the Episcopalians). All our article insists upon is *the call of the Church* for the sake of good order.

5. **The Power and the Authority of the Minister in his Congregation.** According to Article XXVIII it is "a power or commandment of God, to preach the Gospel, to remit and retain

172. See J. L. Neve, *Brief History of the Lutheran Church in America*.

sins, and to administer Sacraments" (61, 15). This is based on John 20:21 ff and Mark 16:15. In the Apology this "ministry of the Word and Sacraments" is called the "power of order" (*potestas ordinis*). "He has also the power of jurisdiction (*potestas jurisdictionis*), i. e., the authority to excommunicate those guilty of open crimes, and again to absolve them if they are converted and seek absolution" (Apology, p. 297, 13). The Smalcald Articles repeat this with reference to the power of jurisdiction: "It is manifest that the common jurisdiction of excommunicating those guilty of manifest crimes belongs to the pastors."¹⁷³

6. The Authority of General Church Organizations. The question here is: what authority do the general Church organizations exercise over the affairs of the local congregation? These general church organizations (such as District Synods, General Bodies) are composed of lay delegates and clerical delegates from the various congregations. The delegates cooperate in the business of the organization; yet, in general, the judgment, experience and training of the ministers determine to a large degree the direction of such government. What is the authority, according to our Confessions, of such government? Since here the organization has usually assumed a form in which one or several persons have authority over others, let us formulate our discussion as follows:

(a) The New Testament recognizes no **distinction between bishops and presbyters.**

173. Appendix, p. 351, 74; 347, 60. Note that the Augsburg Confession (Art. XXVIII) says that this power is to be exercised "without human force, simply by the Word".

Therefore the Smalcald Articles deny that the Roman bishop is by divine right above other bishops and pastors (Appendix, p. 339, 7; 349, 62 ff). That there are different grades of ministers of the Word is not admitted to be of divine right. If there always have been and always will be *primi inter pares* and a subordination of equals to each other, it must be remembered that it is solely to secure good order in the Church and to help the local congregations in their work.

(b) To such government our Confessions refer when they speak of "bishops and pastors."¹⁷⁴ **The Church needs a government outside of the local congregation, but its authority is entirely subordinate to that of the local congregation.** According to our American form of church government the various local organizations unite in order to secure cooperation in common undertakings. These synods have such powers as are delegated to them by the constitution adopted. "The ministry of preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments is above that which is occupied with the details of Church government and external administration" (p. 444). This is expressed in the following rules laid down in the Confessions: (1) "Where the regular bishops persecute the Gospel and refuse to ordain suitable persons, every church has in this case full authority to ordain its own ministers."¹⁷⁵ (2) The bishops have no power to decree anything against

174. Art. XXVIII of the Augustana, §§ 20, 23, 34, 49, 53, 69.

175. Smalcald Articles, appendix, p. 349, 65 ff.

the Gospel.¹⁷⁶ They must not "make ordinances . . . that thereby we should merit grace or make satisfaction for sins, or that consciences be bound to judge them necessary services."¹⁷⁷ To these we add (3) that the power of such external government is not to be exercised by the rigid enforcement of laws, but by appealing to the judgment and consciences of the individual members of the local congregations.

ARTICLE FIFTEEN

Of Rites and Usages

Of Rites and Usages in the Church, they teach, that those ought to be observed which may be observed without sin, and which are profitable unto tranquility and good order in the Church, as particular holydays, festivals, and the like.

Nevertheless, concerning such things, let men be admonished that consciences are not to be burdened, as though such observance was necessary to salvation. They are admonished also that human traditions instituted to propitiate God, to merit grace and to make satisfaction for sins, are opposed to the Gospel and the doctrine of faith. Wherefore vows

De ritibus ecclesiasticis decent, quod ritus illi servandi sint, qui sine peccato servari possunt et prosunt ad tranquillitatem et bonum ordinem in ecclesia, sicut certae feriae, festa et similia.

De talibus rebus tamen admonentur homines, ne conscientiae onerentur tamquam talis cultus ad salutem necessarius sit.

Admonentur etiam, quod traditiones humanae institutae ad placandum Deum, ad promerendam gratiam et satisfaciendum pro peccatis adversentur evangelio et doctrinae fidei. Quare vota et traditiones de cibis et diebus cet. institutae ad promerendam gratiam et

176. Art. XXVIII, §§ 34, 23.

177. Ibid. §§ 53, 39, 61.

and traditions concerning meats and days, etc., instituted to merit grace and to make satisfaction for sins, are useless and contrary to the Gospel.

satisfaciendum pro peccatis inutiles sint et contra evangelium.

There is a certain connection between this article and Article VII where we read: "Nor is it necessary that human traditions, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike." In fact, this sentence is **the theme** of Article XV as well as XXVI, and some parts of Article XXVIII must be taken in this connection.

1. The Aim of this Article is to lay down principles regarding church usages which cannot claim to have a divine commandment to support them. Things that God has clearly commanded in His Word must be observed. There can be no argument about that. *But how with so many things which have come to be usages in the whole Church, or in parts of the Church, on which there may be difference of opinion as to whether they can be demanded or not?* For instance, what shall be our attitude toward the order of service (liturgy), ceremonies, vestments etc., toward the question of holy days (Christmas, Easter, Good Friday, Ascension Day, Pentecost)? We find a complete enumeration of things that Melancthon had in mind in the corresponding article of the Apology, p. 224 ff. Here principles are laid down by which we may be guided.

Note: This article brings out the **difference between the Lutheran and the Puritan churches**, although its contents are directed more against Rome. Things which the Puritan churches, following Zwingli, rejected our Lutheran Church admits. *Zwingli* did away with church festivals

outside of the Sundays, as he was also opposed to bells, organs, altars, paintings, the cross, the pericopes and liturgical formulas. His ideal of the Church was "a spiritual Sparta."¹⁷⁸ Over against this radicalism, which found special expression among the Presbyterians in Scotland and among the Puritans in general, *Luther* followed more conservative tendencies, recognizing the history of the Church. This tendency is without special argument expressed in our article. The real argument is here with the Roman Church.

2. The Principles that should guide us in the observation or rejection of rites and usages in the Church, are the following:

(a) *Ceremonies that are divinely commanded must be maintained.* These are the Sacraments of the Church.¹⁷⁹

(b) *With respect to ceremonies that God has not commanded there must be liberty.* This is especially emphasized in Article XXVI of the Confession. (Augsburg Confession, pp. 56, 42-46.

(c) *Ceremonies should not be multiplied* in the Church (53:1-3), because (1) they tend to obscure the doctrine of free grace (p. 53, 4 ff.); (2) they may lead men to think lightly of the real commandments with respect to their ordinary calling (p. 54, 8 ff.); (3) they may burden men's conscience when they consider these observances to be necessary acts of worship (pp. 54, 12; also 63, 37, 49; 64, 39 ff.). *Immersion* might be mentioned here, because in the Apology also such ceremonies are excluded that cannot be performed "without great inconvenience" (227, 51).

(d) *Yet our article speaks of rites and usages which "ought to be observed."* In Article XXV we

178. Zoeckler, p. 256. J. Stahl, *Luth. Kirche und Union*, p. 12 ff.

179. Apol. pp. 213, 2; 226, 34 ff.

read: "And nevertheless we teach that in these matters the use of liberty is so controlled, that . . . without a reasonable cause nothing in customary rites be changed" (227, 51). **When may we say that rites and usages ought to be observed?** Let us state (1) that such ought to be observed of which must be held that they "**are profitable,**" which help that "all things in the churches might be done in order and becomingly" (Apol. 221, 2), and also help to maintain harmony (227, 51; 56, 53). *For instance:* Melancthon argues in Article XXVI, on the basis of the history of the ancient Church, that *in itself there is no divine obligation* to celebrate Easter and to observe it everywhere at one and the same time (p. 56, 40); there is no divine obligation to observe the Lord's Day on Sunday instead of Saturday (p. 65, 28). *And yet for the sake of good order,* "that the people might know when they ought to come together" we should not make use of our liberty but rather yield to the established usage of the Church to assemble "on a certain day." Again (2) legitimate rites and usages ought to be observed "**for the sake of charity.**" So we read at many places in the Confessions. It is especially emphasized that offense should not be given to others,¹⁸⁰ the *inexperienced* should not be offended.¹⁸¹ Finally (3) the Formula of Concord, in Article X on Adiaphora, added another reason which developed out of the adiaphoristic controversies, namely the duty of **professing the truth:** "In time of persecution, when a bold confession is required of us, we

180. Art. XXVIII, pp. 53-56.

181. Apol. 298, 16. Formula of Concord, p. 523, 13.

should not yield to the enemies in regard to such adiaphora. . . . For in such a case it is no longer a question concerning adiaphora, but concerning the truth of the Gospel," etc.¹⁸² The following passages of Scripture are quoted: Gal. 5, 1; 2 Cor. 6, 14; Gal. 2, 5; 1 Cor. 8, 9; Rom. 14, 13.

Note 1: Already the Marburg (13) and the Schwabach articles (17), as also the edition of the Confession of 1533 and the Variata of 1540 laid down principles on the adiaphora. In the Variata we even find the term *res adiaphorae*. It is said of them that *extra casum scandali* they can be omitted without sin. But the thought that *in statu confessionis* they cease to be adiaphora is the special contribution of the Formula of Concord on the basis of the experience in the adiaphoristic controversies.¹⁸³ It was Matthias Flacius who in his reply to Melancthon stated the correct principle: "Nothing is an adiaphoron in a case where profession is to be made and offence might be given (*Nihil est adiaphoron in casu confessionis et scandali*)."¹⁸⁴

Note 2: What is an adiaphoron? (1) *Not something that is "neither right nor wrong."* Every act in the religious and moral sphere is always either right or wrong; purely externals only may be indifferent (for illustrations see under Art. XVIII, the section I, a). (2) It is claimed that *in matters religious and moral man's conscience decides* whether actions are right or wrong. We answer: While it is true that a good man will follow his conscience yet this does not decide that, objectively, the action is right. Not man's conscience, but God's revealed Law furnishes the real criterion. In Ethics we learn of a misguided conscience. Philip II of Spain, on his deathbed, was troubled in his conscience because he had not killed enough Protestants. Ethics also knows of a narrow, of a broad, of a manipulated conscience. (3) *But are there not religious and ethical matters*

182. *Epit.* 523, 6. *Sol. Decl.* 644, 5; 645, 10; 648, 28.

183. See Kurtz, *Church History* (Eng. edition 1888), II, pp. 141-5.

184. Hauck, *R. E.*, VI, art. of Kawerau, p. 84.

on which in Scripture there is no plain delivery? Answer: The Lutheran Church has always taught the sufficiency of the Scriptures (*sufficientia scripturae*). Even where there is no express commandment the guiding principle is given. (We refer to such matters as horse racing, betting, gambling). (4) *What is an adiaphoron?* Something which in itself may be indifferent, but under certain circumstances may cease to be so. We emphasize the above mentioned sentence of Matthias Flacius: "Nothing is an adiaphoron in a case where profession is to be made and offense might be given." (In the light of past and recent history examples such as the following may be given: Observation of a *certain* day of rest in the Sunday question (see the following discussion of the Sunday problem); the yielding to ceremonies before persecution as did Melancthon; social pleasures such as card playing, dancing, theater, smoking, use of wine.

e) *Which rites and usages must be avoided?* Such as cannot be observed without sin. In **our article** we read: "They are admonished also that human traditions, instituted to propitiate God, to merit grace and to make satisfaction for sins, are opposed to the Gospel and the doctrine of faith. Wherefore vows and traditions concerning meats and days, etc., instituted to merit grace and to make satisfaction for sins, are useless and contrary to the Gospel." The whole **body of our Confession abounds** with expressions on the subject. The Apology is very outspoken: "For Scripture calls traditions doctrines of demons, when it is taught that religious rites are serviceable to merit the remission of sins and grace" (p. 218, 4). "If the adversaries defend these human services as meriting justification, grace and the remission of sins, they absolutely establish the kingdom of Antichrist" (220, 18). Daniel (11, 38) indicates

that new human services will be the very form and constitution of Antichrist" (221, 19).

3. Does the Sunday come under the discussion of Rites and Usages in the Church?

(a) The Augsburg Confession. The Sunday is not mentioned in this article which speaks only of "particular holy days, festivals and the like." Neither is it mentioned in the Apology, although there the whole language sounds as if Melancthon was including the Sunday (cf. 221, 2). But in Article XXVIII (65, 53) we read: "What then, are we to think of the Sunday and like rites in the house of God?" Again: "Of this kind is the observance of the Lord's Day, Easter, and Pentecost, and like holy days and rites. For those who judge that, by authority of the Church, the observance of the Lord's Day, instead of the Sabbath Day, was ordained as a thing necessary, do greatly err (*longe errant*). Scripture has abrogated the Sabbath Day; for it teaches that, since the Gospel has been revealed, all the ceremonies of Moses can be omitted. And yet, because it was necessary to appoint a certain day, that the people might know when they ought to come together, it appears that the Church (the Apostles) designated the Lord's Day for this purpose; and this day seems to have been chosen all the more for this additional reason, that men might have an example of Christian liberty, and might know that the keeping neither of the Sabbath, nor of any other day, was necessary." Protest is made even against the thought that the Apostles had changed the law with respect to the

day (p. 66, 61). There is admitted in this discussion (1) that by not observing the day we may make ourselves guilty of the sin of giving "offense to others." That this must be avoided is repeated three times: "Without offense to others" (*sine offensione aliorum*). The thought always recurs: "It is proper that the churches should keep such ordinances for the sake of charity and tranquility." It is admitted (2) that it is lawful for the authorities of the Church "to appoint a certain day, that the people might know when they ought to come together" for worship, so that "things be done orderly in the Church," but it is insisted upon (3) that the observance of the day is not "necessary to salvation," as it is to be numbered among "the ceremonies of Moses," which have been abrogated according to Col. 2:16.

(b) **The Large Catechism** of Luther must be taken together with the expositions of Melancthon in the Augsburg Confession. Luther, in his interpretation of the third commandment, says that this commandment "according to its *gross sense* does not pertain to us Christians," the Sabbath "in this gross sense" is numbered among "the other ordinances of the Old Testament," "which have now been made free through Christ." Yet Luther wants a day to be recognized as a day of rest, "first of all for bodily causes and necessities, which nature teaches and requires; and for the common people, man-servants and maid-servants, who are occupied the whole week with their work and trade, that for a day they may forbear, in order to rest and be refreshed." Luther agrees

with Melanchthon that an observance of the Lord's Day cannot be based upon the Law of Moses. He bases it upon the order of creation. Man needs a day of rest. He retains the commandment: "Remember the Sabbath (Feiertag, day of rest) to keep it holy." He asks: "What is meant by keeping it holy?" and then answers: "Nothing else than to be occupied in holy words, works and life. For the day needs no sanctification for itself; for in itself it has been created holy (German text: From the beginning of the creation it was sanctified by its Creator). But God desires it to be holy to thee." To Luther it is an important thing that the day of rest be sanctified by being used for holy things. "But this, I say, *is not limited to any time, as with the Jews, that it must be just on this or that day*; for in itself no one day is better than another day." But the chief thing for Luther is "that on such day of rest (since otherwise it cannot be accomplished) time and opportunity be taken to attend divine service." We can go too far in emphasizing the abrogation of the Sabbath as a day of rest. True, the Sabbath is abrogated, especially the ceremonial part of it (to which belongs also the insistence on "this or that day"), but Luther insists upon a day of rest, to be used as the Lord's Day "so that we meet and hear and treat of God's Word." Luther says: "Since, therefore, so much depends upon God's Word that without it no Sabbath can be kept holy, we ought to know that God will insist upon a strict observance of this commandment, and will punish all who despise His Word and are not

willing to hear and to learn it, especially at the time appointed for this purpose.¹⁸⁵

The matter is very simple: In all countries where Christianity influences civil life, the civil laws prescribe a day of rest on which all unnecessary work must cease. A Christian is bound to observe this day of rest prescribed by the law; this is obedience to the *fourth* commandment of submitting to all constituted authorities. The *third* commandment requires us to take and use this day of rest and consecrate it to God by hearing His Word and worshipping Him together with other Christians. One who does not work on Sunday has, therefore, obeyed that part of the fourth commandment, but if he neglects to use it to hear and to learn God's Word, he has broken the third commandment.

ARTICLE SIXTEEN

Of Civil Affairs

Of Civil Affairs, they teach, that lawful civil ordinances are good works of God, and that it is right for Christians to bear civil office, to sit as judges, to determine matters by the Imperial and other existing laws, to award just punishments, to engage in just wars, to serve as soldiers, to make legal contracts, to hold property, to make oath when required by the magistrates,

De rebus civilibus docent, quod legitimæ ordinationes civiles sint bona opera Dei, quod christianis liceat gerere magistratus, exercere iudicia, iudicare res ex imperatoris et aliis præsentibus legibus, supplicia iure constituere, iure bellare, militare, lege contrahere, tenere proprium, iusiurandum postulantis magistratibus dare, ducere uxorum, nubere. Damnant Anabaptistas,

185. A thorough treatment of the Luth. conception of the Sunday was given in the Evangelical Quarterly Review of 1869, pp. 524-555 by H. E. Jacobs.

to marry, to be given in marriage.

They condemn the Anabaptists who forbid these civil offices to Christians. They condemn also those who do not place the perfection of the Gospel in the fear of God and in faith, but in forsaking civil offices; for the Gospel teaches an eternal righteousness of the heart. Meanwhile, it does not destroy the State or the family, but especially requires their preservation as ordinances of God, and in such ordinances the exercise of charity. Therefore, Christians are necessarily bound to obey their own magistrates and laws, save only when commanded to sin, for then they ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29).

qui interdicunt haec civilia officia christianis.

Damnant et illos, qui evangelicam perfectionem non collocant in timore Dei et fide, sed in deserendis civilibus officiis, quia evangelium tradit iustitiam aeternam cordis. Interim non dissipat politiam aut oeconomiam, sed maxime postulat conservare tamquam ordinationes Dei, et in talibus ordinationibus exercere caritatem. Itaque necessario debent christiani obedire magistratibus suis et legibus; nisi quum iubent peccare, tunc enim magis debent obedire Deo quam hominibus. Actor. 5, 29.

The leading thoughts of this article may be expressed in the following three statements: (1) Civil government is a divine institution. (2) It is right to hold property. (3) Marriage is a state pleasing to God. In Article XV we had an expression of Lutheran conservatism in Church matters; here it is the **principle of conservatism with reference to matters civil** (in *rebus civilibus*). In the Variata of 1540 a remark which is characteristic for the Lutheran Church was added: *Artes probatas legibus exercere*. The exercise of legitimate arts belongs to the things which shall have a

right in the Christian Church. The conservative principle of Lutheranism has encouraged the cultivation of science and art.

1. The Teaching of our Church on Civil Government. The text of the Confession says: "They teach, that lawful civil ordinances are good works of God." To this the **Anabaptists** were opposed, who taught that among Christians there was no government necessary. Such an attitude the **Lutherans** regarded as an ignoring of the natural order. We have to live under a government "just as we have been necessarily placed under the laws of seasons, the changes of winter and summer" (Apology, p. 228, 58). In Rom. 13:1 we read: "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." *What follows from this principle?*

(a) The duty of obedience to the government. Our article closes with the admonition: "Therefore, Christians are necessarily to obey their own magistrates and laws, save only when commanded to sin, for then they ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29)." Paul taught obedience to the government *even though a Nero* was on the throne. According to Romans 13 we must be subject to the "powers that be." The Apology says: "The Gospel . . . commands that we obey present laws, whether they have been framed by heathen or by others" (p. 227, 55). *An evil government is better than no government.* It is characteristic of the Lutherans that they have always been **opposed to revolution**. In this *Lutherans* differ from the *Reformed* people who have ever been quick to take up arms against the

government. Only when the government should command us to sin then are we justified in not obeying, according to Acts 5:29. (R. E. XVI, 170, 55).

(b) **We are justified in making use of the different forms of public redress.** This also follows from the principle that civil government is a divine institution. After the Apology has stated that "*private redress* is prohibited not by advice, but by command" (Matth. 5:39; Rom. 12:19) it proceeds by saying: "*Public redress*, which is made through the office of the magistrate, is not advised against, but is commanded, and is a work of God, according to Paul (Rom. 13:1 ff). Now the **different kinds of public redress** are legal decisions, capital punishment, wars, military service."¹⁸⁶ To this we may add from our article the "*oath* when required by the magistrates."¹⁸⁷ On *wars* our article says that it must be "just wars." To this the Formula of Concord adds that a Christian can with a good conscience be even a "maker of arms" (531, 18). The legitimacy of *capital punishment* is defended in Luther's Large Catechism (419, 181), in the Formula of Concord both in the Epitome (530, 16) and in the Solid Declaration (669, 21).

Note: The Socinians, the Mennonites and the Quakers, etc., reject war and capital punishment; the Mennonites and the Quakers also the making of oath and the going to law.

(c) **It is right for Christians to bear civil office.** (Apol. 227, 53. Formula of Concord, Epit. p. 530, 13, Sol. Decl., p. 668, 18).

Note: The Reformed Presbyterians (Covenanters) say that a Christian cannot hold civil office, unless the

186. Apol. 228 (59). Cf. Formula of Concord 530 (12 ff.)

187. See also Formula of Concord, p. 530 (15).

constitution of the government recognizes God as the source of all power. As to the teaching of our Confessions on the separation between Church and State, see below (d).

(d) Christians can “**sit as judges, to determine matters by the Imperial and other existing laws**, to award just punishments.” *The “existing laws” of a country are not always identical with the divine laws.* They cannot be. The **divine laws** as contained in the Holy Scriptures, in many cases, have to express the Christian ideal, while the **laws of a civil government**, under the existing conditions of society, cannot go above the level of general ethics. For instance, the *divorce laws* of a country cannot be confined to the same as to what the Scriptures permit as grounds for a divorce. But then **the question** comes: Can a Christian be a judge and determine matters by the “existing laws?” According to our article, he can. He needs only be “just.” The Lutheran Church does not believe in a theocracy such as Calvin endeavored to establish in Geneva, and Knox had intended in Scotland. Lutheranism has always stood for a *separation between Church and State*. The late J. G. Butler (Washington, D. C.), used to say: “Politics is applied Christianity.” Calvin said: “God’s Word is the law of the nation.” (See R. E. XVI, 171, 15).

2. The teaching of our Church on the Right to hold Property. Our article says: “It is right for Christians . . . to make legal contracts, to hold property.” To this the German text adds: to buy and to sell (in old German: *Keuffen und verkeuffen*). It is **not “Christian perfection** not to hold property” (228, 56), nor is the Christian “in

duty bound to devote it to the Church" (531, 17; 669, 22). Melanchthon says: "For Scripture does not command that property be common, but the Law of the Decalogue, when it says (Ex. 20:15): 'Thou shalt not steal,' distinguishes rights of ownership, and commands each one to hold what is his own." (Apol. 226, 63). All this is evidently **aimed at the Romanists** with their claim that the life of poverty in the monastery — Melanchthon calls it a Satanic Communion (229, 56 — is a life of perfection. The question has been raised whether Christians ought to loan money on interest. **Usury** is forbidden in the Scriptures, but with reference to **loaning money on interest**, this is included in the expression "to make legal contracts" and the Apology explains this: "There are infinite discussions concerning contracts, in reference to which good consciences can never be satisfied, unless they know the rule that it is lawful for a Christian to make use of civil ordinances and laws." (229, 64)¹⁸⁸

3. The Teaching of our Church on the state of Marriage. It is right for Christians "to marry, to be given in marriage." Melanchthon changed this in his Variata of 1540 to *contrahere legitima conjugia*, a silent reference, evidently, to the recently contracted bigamy of Philip of Hessa, over the publicity of which Melanchthon was much worried.¹⁸⁹ The *Lutheran Church* destroys neither the state nor "the family, but especially requires their preservation as ordinances of God." The *Romanists* regarded the married life as an inferior state and therefore

188. Comp. Luther on the seventh commandment in the Large Catechism.

189. C. Schmidt, Melanchthon, p. 367 ff.

demanded celibacy for the priests. Against these, Articles XXIII and XXVII in Confession and Apology are directed. The Lutheran Church stands for the principle that the Christian virtues shall be exercised in the state of marriage.

ARTICLE SEVENTEEN

Christ's Return to Judgment

Also they teach, that, at the Consummation of the World, Christ shall appear for judgment, and shall raise up all the dead; he shall give to the godly and elect eternal life and everlasting joys, but ungodly men and the devils he shall condemn to be tormented without end.

They condemn the Anabaptists who think that there will be an end to all punishments of condemned men and devils. They condemn also others, who are now spreading certain Jewish opinions that, before the resurrection of the dead, the godly shall take possession of the kingdom of the world, the ungodly being everywhere suppressed [exterminated].

Item docent, quod Christus apparebit in consummatione mundi ad iudicandum, et mortuos omnes resuscitabit, piis et electis dabit vitam aeternam et perpetua gaudia, impios autem homines ac diabolos condemnabit, ut sine fine crucientur.

Damnant Anabaptistas, qui, sentiunt hominibus damnatis ac diabolis finem poenarum futurum esse.

Damnant et alios, qui nunc spargunt iudaicas opiniones, quod ante resurrectionem mortuorum pii regnum mundi occupaturi sint, ubique oppressis impiis.

This article is the last one concerning doctrines in the Augsburg Confession.¹⁹⁰ The Schwabach

190. The following three articles (18, 19, and 20) are supplementary: 18 and 19 supplement Art. II, and 20 the Articles IV and VI. The last article of the doctrinal part of the Confession (21 on Invocation of Saints) prepares for the articles of the second part on abuses.

Articles also closed with Christ's return to judgment (in Art. XV).

1. Christ's Return for Judgment.

A complete doctrine of eschatology is not given in this article. The aim of the Augsburg Confession, as we have found everywhere, is not at a doctrinal compendium (like Melanchthon's *Loci*), but merely at offering a *Confession* with special reference to such points of doctrine that are characteristic to Lutheranism as a church. And it confines itself to the essential, and to such things which have a clear foundation in the Scriptures. This article does not transgress upon that which is speculative and upon things which touch with philosophy (for instance, the immortality of the soul and the intermediate state). We can also observe the conciliatory tendency in this article. It says nothing on Antichrist and nothing on purgatory. Luther had expected an expression on these subjects as we know from his letter to Dr. Jonas.¹⁹¹ The Lutherans believed that the papacy was part of the revelation of Antichrist,¹⁹² and they rejected the Roman doctrine of purgatory,¹⁹³ but the Confessors at Augsburg did not regard it wise to mention these matters here.

a. Christ's coming for judgment: (1) He shall "appear," i. e., *visibly* (Acts 1:77). (2) He shall appear "*for judgment*" (John 5:22,27).

191. De Wette, *Luther's Briefe* IV, 110; Enders, *Luther's Briefwechsel* VIII, 133.

192. Luther wrote: "To me there is no doubt any more that the Pope with the Turk is Antichrist; believe what you will." Erl. Ed. VII,

184. Comp. Book of Concord, p. 220, 18; 320, 10, 13, 14; 345, 39; 346, 41.

193. Apol. 212, 77; 200, 26; 210, 70; Smalcald Art. 315, 13.

b. Christ “shall **raise up all the dead.**” It is interesting to observe that in a former draft of our Confession Melancthon had written “that all deceased men shall be raised up *with the same body in which they died.*” This he changed before the delivery of the documents to the present reading. It reminds us of the discussion there has been on the question, whether we should speak of a resurrection of the *body*, or of the *flesh*. We have discussed this matter in the treatment of the Apostles’ Creed and, therefore, can refer to I, 2 (p. 56 ff.) in our Introduction to the Symbolical Books.

c. There will be **two classes**: (1) “the *godly and elect*” to whom shall be given “eternal life and everlasting joys,” and (2) the “*ungodly men and devils*” who shall be condemned and tormented without end. This stumbling block of the Universalists and the Unitarians is brought to an unequivocal expression, because it is the unmistakable teaching of the Scriptures in many places: John 5:29; Dan. 12:2; Matthew 25:41-46.

2. The Rejection of Apokatastasis is contained in the following words: “They condemn the *Anabaptists* who think that there will be an end to the punishments of the condemned men and devils.” That in the end all will be saved was taught for the first time by the Church father *Origen*. Against this doctrine our article opposes the teaching that the ungodly and devils shall “be tormented without end.”

Note: Some Universalists believe that there will be in the future world a punishment for a time, but that it will be a mere process of purification and that all will be saved in the end. Others again (Adventists and Russellites) be-

lieve that the wicked will in the end be annihilated. The word "eternal" in Matthew 25:41 is opposed to this.

3. The Rejection of Chiliasm. "They condemn also others who are now spreading certain Jewish opinions, that, before the resurrection of the dead, the godly shall take possession of the kingdom of the world, the ungodly being everywhere suppressed (exterminated.)"

a. What is chiliasm? This word, *derived from* the number thousand (*chilioi*) in Greek, designates a doctrine which has been *built chiefly upon* Rev. 20:2-7, in connection with some other passages of Scripture (1 Cor. 15:25 ff.; 1 Thess. 4:13 ff.; the visions of Hezekiel and Daniel). At the end of time, usually thought to be near at hand, *there shall be*, for a period of about a thousand years, a glorious reign of the visibly appearing Christ and His then living believers, including those of the first resurrection, in the form of an earthly theocracy, in which all evil and the powers of darkness (Antichrist) shall be suppressed.¹⁹⁴ The Chiliasts, in the History of Doctrines, may be viewed in three groups:

First: **The extreme Chiliasts** (*chiliasmus crassus*) who were influenced by Jewish-apocalyptic ideas.¹⁹⁵ They believed exactly as is rejected in our article. *The emphasis is upon* a reign of Christ and His followers in the world, and upon the suppression or extermination of the enemies. The persecution during the first centuries of the Church was the constant stimulation for these chiliastic hopes. As adherents may be enumerated

194. See article on chiliasm in *R. E.* III, 805 ff.

Cerinth, the Ebionites and Montanism. Milder forms were held by Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Lactantius Methodius. At the time of Augustine, chiliasm came into disfavor.¹⁹⁵ But it was renewed again with special fanaticism at the Reformation time by the Anabaptists. The first to put it into practice was Thomas Muenzer in the peasants' war (1525) and the Zwickau prophets at Muenster (1534).

Second: **A middle group of Chiliasts** is not interested in the "Jewish opinions," but would like to do justice to the teaching of the many passages of Scripture on this subject. Some *leading thoughts are these*: Christ, at His appearance, destroys Antichrist, binds Satan, gathers the converts of Israel in the Holy Land, increasing their number by the believers of the first resurrection, and then from here reigns over the whole earth while great missionary activities are extended to all heathen. At the end of the thousand years Satan again comes into power, seducing many and leading his followers against Christ and His Kingdom. But he is overcome, and now comes the great resurrection, the day of judgment and eternal salvation for the followers of the Lord. The Chiliasts of this type (*chiliasmus subtilior*), who received their inspiration chiefly through Bengel and von Hofmann and represent a great host of scholars (Crusius,

195. Expressed in the Book of Henoch, the Apocalypse of Baruch, especially the Book of Ezra. The emphasis is upon the following thoughts: the great tribulation of the last times, appearance of the Messiah, war of the nations against the Messiah and their defeat, the coming down of the heavenly Jerusalem, the gathering of the dispersed Israelites, the reign of the Messiah, renovation of the world, universal resurrection, judgment, salvation and condemnation.

195. Cf. De civitate Dei 20: 7, 9.

Delitzsch. Kurtz, Beck, J. P. Lange, the Erlangen school in general), differ greatly among themselves. The *theater* of the chiliastic reign is, according to some, earth and heaven, according to others the earth only, and according to still others Canaan and Jerusalem. The *participants* are according to some the converted Jews and the martyrs, either all of them or those of the last times; according to others all the believers, including those of the Old Testament. Some say, they will be sinless; others, almost sinless. *Christ* is visibly present, at least at times. The *purpose* of the millennium is found in this that the believers are to enjoy the communion with Christ, or to engage in special missionary endeavors.¹⁹⁷ The *condition* is characterized as follows: There will be no wars any more (Is. 9:5; 2:4; Mich. 4:3-4); ferocity and mutual destruction among animals shall cease (Is. 11:6-8); beauty and fertility of the earth is increased (Is. 35:1 ff.; 41:18-19); sun and moon are to shine seven times brighter than at other times (Is. 30:26; 65:17); man shall again reach an age as at the beginning of the race, and the power of death shall diminish (Is. 65:20-22). Then there is,

Third: the so-called **chiliasmus subtilissimus**, which consists in the belief that before judgment there will come for the Church a time when the spiritual presence of Christ shall be especially felt and a universal religious revival shall take place (Spener, Martensen).

b. The application of our article: There are many interpreters of Article XVII, who insist that *the rejectory sentence refers only to the*

197. Meusel, *Kirchl. Handlexikon* I, 711 ff.

chiliasm of the first class. As proof they quote the remark "Jewish opinions," and they call our attention to the words of our text: "who are *now* spreading," etc. We must admit that here Melanchthon does refer to the Anabaptists of the Reformation time, and we know how radical their views were.¹⁹⁸ The Anabaptists movement was very injurious to the reputation of the Lutheran reformation. Dr. Eck's 404 theses linked the Anabaptists to the Lutheran movement, and in the first draft of the Confutation there was a chapter with the superscription: "The fruit of Luther's teaching as it can be seen in Anabaptism." So the Lutherans were naturally interested in rejecting the responsibility for the views of the Anabaptists.

But **what should be the attitude of "the Church of the Word"** to the many passages of *Scripture, which the Chiliasts have been aiming to interpret?* The confessional representatives of Lutheranism up to this day have always warned against the construction of a doctrine on the basis of the *seemingly* chialistic passages of Scripture. The teaching of the Scriptures is, at least for our age, not sufficiently clear on this subject. Rev. 20:4-10 seems to contain the outline of the chiliastic system. But it is **not conclusive** and the chiliastic interpreters may err in their endeavors to use other prophetic parts of Scripture to complete the outline of Rev. 20 into a doctrinal structure. Our attitude to all those parts of Scripture should be that of an open mind for all that the Word of God teaches, but at the same time of greatest care that

198. Cf. Zoeckler, *Augsb. Conf.*, p. 270; Plitt, *Einleitung in die Augsb. Conf.* II, 421.

we do not construct them into a doctrine that is at variance with the analogy of faith (Rom. 12:7).¹⁹⁹

Is, then, the Chiliasm of the second and third group rejected by the sentence of our article? As we have seen, they differ so much among themselves. But while these more modern Chiliasts do not follow "Jewish opinions," and are free from the radicalism of the Anabaptists and must be praised for their aim at doing justice to parts of Scripture that have been more or less neglected, yet the admissibility of the agreement of their views with this article of our Confession must depend upon their **rejection of the following points:** (1) the visible appearance of Christ for a reign of a thousand years before the revelation of Antichrist and judgment day (against Heb. 9:28; Matthew 25:31); (2) an outwardly victorious Kingdom of Christ upon earth (against John 18:36); (3) the expectation, on this side of eternity, of a time when there shall be no struggle with the enemies of Christ, with sin, and when there shall be no cross to bear (against Acts 14:21; Matthew 16:24; Luke 18:8; 17:26).²⁰⁰

Note: In the days when the Augsburg Confession was written there occurred something in the city of Augsburg that lends color to the words in our article "who are now spreading certain Jewish opinions." An Anabaptist, A.

199. *Augustine* counted the beginning of the millennium from the beginning of the Christian Church and expected its termination at the end of the first thousand years. *Lutheran interpreters*, following Luther himself (cf. J. Koestlin, *Theology of Luther II*, 575 ff.) who pointed to the symbolic meaning of the number 1000 as indicating a completeness, suggest that by 1000 there may simply be meant the time of grace between the beginning of the Church and Christ's last advent. See W. Rohnert, *Dogmatik der lutherischen Kirche*, p. 590 ff.

200. In the *Variata* of 1540 Melancthon remarks that the Church in this life will always be subject to cross and tribulation.

Bader, conspired with Jews for the establishment of a millennium of which he was to be king. He was at the point of sending his apostles to promulgate the new order of things. A crown, scepter, a golden chain, a golden dagger and precious garments had already been procured. It became public, and the Lutheran reformation was burdened with the responsibility.²⁰¹ [See K. Engler, *Das Tausendjaehrige Reich* (Ihloff, Neumeunster)].

ARTICLE EIGHTEEN

Of Free Will

Of the Freedom of the Will, they teach, that man's will has some liberty for the attainment of civil righteousness, and for the choice of things subject to reason. Nevertheless, it has no power, without the Holy Ghost, to work the righteousness of God, that is, spiritual righteousness; since the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God [I Cor. 2:14]; but this righteousness is wrought in the heart when the Holy Ghost is received through the Word. These things are said in as many words by Augustine in his *Hypognosticon*, book III.: "We grant that all men have a certain freedom of will in judging according to [natural] reason; not such freedom, however, whereby it is capable, without God, either to begin, or much less to com-

De libero arbitrio docent, quod humana voluntas habeat aliquam libertatem ad efficiendam civilem iustitiam et deligendas res rationi subiectas. Sed non habet vim sine Spiritu Sancto efficiendae iustitiae Dei seu iustitiae spiritualis, quia animalis homo non percipit ea, quae sunt Spiritus Dei; sed haec fit in cordibus, quum per verbum Spiritus Sanctus concipitur. Haec totidem verbis dicit Augustinus lib. III. *Hypognosticon*; "*Esse fatemur liberum arbitrium omnibus hominibus, habens quidem iudicium rationis, non per quod sit idoneum in iis, quae ad Deum pertinent, sine Deo aut inchoare aut certe peragere, sed tantum in operibus vitae praesentis tam bonis quam etiam malis. Bonis dico, quae de bono naturae oriuntur, id est velle*

201. See K. Engler, *Das Tausendjaehrige Reich* (Ihloff, Neumeunster).

plete aught in things pertaining to God, but only in works of this life, whether good or evil. 'Good,' I call those works which spring from the good in Nature, that is, to have a will to labor in the field, to eat and drink, to have a friend, to clothe oneself, to build a house, to marry, to raise cattle, to learn divers useful arts, or whatsoever good pertains to this life, none of which things are without dependence on the providence of God; yea, of Him and through Him they are and have their beginning, 'Evil,' I call such works as to have a will to worship an idol, to commit murder," etc.

They condemn the Pelagians and others who teach that, without the Holy Ghost, by the power of nature alone, we are able to love God above all things; also to do the commandments of God as touching "the substance of the act."

For, although nature is able in some sort to do the outward work (for it is able to keep the hands from theft and murder), yet it cannot work the inward motions, such as the fear of God, trust in God, chastity, patience, etc.

laborare in agro, velle manducare et bibere, velle habere amicum, velle habere indumenta, velle fabricare domum, uxorem velle ducere, pecora nutrire, artem discere diversarum rerum bonarum, vel quidquid bonum ad praesentem pertinet vitam. Quae omnia non sine divino gubernaculo subsistunt, imo ex ipso et per ipsum sunt et esse coeperunt. Malis vero dico, ut est velle idolum colere, velle homicidium cet."

Damnante Pelagianos et alios, qui docent, quod sine Spiritu Sancto solis naturae viribus possimus Deum super omnia diligere, item praecepta Dei facere quoad substantiam actuum. Quamquam enim externa opera aliquo modo efficere natura possit (potest enim continere manus a furto, a caede), tamen interiores motus non potest efficere, ut timorem Dei, fiduciam erga Deum, castitatem, patientiam cet.

This is the first of the four supplementary articles, added by the Confessors with the intention to explain more fully some thoughts dealt with in the body of doctrines of our Augustana. For, as we have stated again and again, the first seventeen articles, up to the one treating of Christ's Return to Judgment, present a body of doctrines, a kind of system, and Articles XVIII to XXI have been added for supplementary purposes. Articles XVIII (of Free Will) and XIX (Cause of Sin) in particular are designed to deal with questions suggested by Article II (of Original Sin), the great fundamental article of anthropology. **How is it with man's Free Will after his fall into sin?** — this is the question to be answered in our Article XVIII.

With this we have already indicated the point of view from which the doctrine of Free Will is here to be discussed. In the Formula of Concord (p. 496) we read: "Since the will of man is found in **four dissimilar states**, namely: 1. Before the fall; 2. Since the fall; 3. After regeneration; 4. After resurrection of the body: the chief question is only concerning the will and ability of man in the **second state**, namely, *what powers, in spiritual things, he has, for himself, since the fall of our first parents and before regeneration, etc.*"

1. What CAN the Unregenerate do out of his Own Natural Powers?

"Of the Freedom of Will, they teach, that man's will has some liberty for the attainment of civil righteousness, and for the choice of things subject to reason."

Man has freedom **in external things** (*in rebus externis*), regarding matters "subject to reason," in "outward work"; or as the quotation here attributed to Augustine reads.²⁰² "We grant that all

202. It is now known that the writing, from which this important quotation is taken (*Hypomnesticon contra Pelagianos et Coelestianos*, also called *Hypognosticon*, lib. III, c. 4, in Aug. *opp. ed. Antv. X. App. p. 8, 9*) was not from Augustine. Errors of this kind affect in no manner the confessional substance of the Augustana.

men have a certain freedom of will in judging according to (natural) reason." "But only in works of this life whether good or evil." Here is declared that man has the power of choice between alternatives. Whatever he does in things subject to reason, the world will hold him responsible, because he is regarded as a person with Free Will. This power more than any other constitutes man a personality. In the will we have the culmination of personality.

a. Among the things mentioned in the quotation attributed to Augustine, there are those *that are external in the strictest sense of the term*: "to have a will to labor in the field, to eat and drink, to have a friend, to clothe oneself, to build a house, to marry, to keep cattle, to learn divers arts, or whatsoever good pertains to this life." These are the things which Quenstedt later called *mediate or indifferent*, because by their nature, or in themselves, they are neither good nor bad. He divides them into **three classes**: "*First*, those that pertain to the condition of our nature such as to stand, sit, sleep, eat, drink, and such like, most of which are common to man and brutes, having mainly respect to the vegetative, positive, appetitive, and locomotive powers of the soul. *Second*, such as pertain to our civil and domestic conduct, such as to buy, sell, go to war, to follow a trade. *Third*, such as pertain to the external government and discipline of the Church, such as to teach and hear the Word of God, to observe certain ceremonies, to give and receive the Sacraments, and similar external works, affecting the external senses."²⁰³ In things of this

203. Schmid, *Doctr. Theol.*, 3d edition, p. 267.

kind the Will of man, of course, is free. Though even here the word "*aliquam*" ("man's will has some liberty," German "dass the Mensch *etlichermassen* einen freien Willen hat") must not be overlooked.

However, one qualification is given, which should not be overlooked: Even in these altogether external things man cannot act independently of divine providence, neither does the quotation forget to add the words: "none of which things are without dependence on the providence of God; yea, of Him and through Him they are and have their beginning."

b. Among these external things in which "man's will has some liberty" our Confession names "**civil righteousness**" (*civilem justitiam*," "*aeusserlich ehrbar zu leben*"), and afterwards speaks of "evil things" (*in rebus malis*), "works as to to have a will to worship an idol, to commit murder, etc." This takes us to matters that are in their nature **not** morally indifferent. Man, in his unregenerated state, can choose between good and evil, that is, if by "good" we do not understand the things pertaining to salvation (spiritual righteousness). By the Fall, man has not been degraded to a mere animal being ("*blosses Naturwesen*") so that all his actions and decisions would be determined by laws of nature (determination, fatalism). He is a being that has self-determination. That means, he can keep what is left in him of the divine image. He can also reject it, choose again and again and sink deeper with every decision, even so low that the difference between him and the brute *seems* to have disappeared.

(1) That man's will has the power to work *civil righteousness* is also emphasized in the

Apology: "It can to a certain extent render civil righteousness or the righteousness of works, it can speak of God, offer to God a certain service in outward works, obey magistrates, parents; by a choice in outward works can restrain the hands from murder, from adultery, from theft" (p. 230). Dr. M. Loy: "May not man in compassion for his fellow-man feed the hungry and visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction? Deeds of kindness are done all over the world every day by men who know nothing or care nothing about the grace of God in Christ Jesus. . . . Some, who do not profess to be Christians, are acknowledged to be good neighbors and estimable citizens. . . . The same fact is apparent in heathen lands. . . . History tells us of heathen philosophers who were so earnest in their pursuit of righteousness that even some Christians have been induced to believe that they were virtually Christians, and have drawn conclusions that are subversive of the Gospel revelation" (Augs. Conf. pp. 835-837). But, as Melancthon in the Apology says, "*Scripture calls it the righteousness of the flesh* which the carnal nature, i. e., reason by itself without the Holy Ghost, renders" (p. 230). It is a righteousness of the flesh," because the motives of the natural man in so many cases are in their last analysis selfish: he wants to have the reputation of being good. Scripture also calls it a "righteousness of the Law," because reason and observation tell him that there is misery in the way of the transgressor. "Accordingly," Dr. H. L. Baugher in his Holman Lecture on our article says, "a man may externally observe all the commandments — like that earnest young

ruler in the Scriptures — and yet be outside, if not far from, the Kingdom of God, be without real goodness. Thus one may acknowledge God — for this, too, is within the sphere of reason, since it is only the fool who says there is no God — may abstain from taking his name in vain, and from all outward profanity, may pay outward and manifest respect to God's day and house, worshipping (outwardly) reverently with his people, may with a beautiful obedience honor his parents, may curb his passions, keep himself pure, be scrupulously honest, be liberal and kind, considerate of the poor, and generous in the support of religious and charitable institutions, may, in short, be a model of an excellent citizen, and yet God, who looks upon the heart, the seat of character, and knows the secrets thereof, will say of such a man — as He virtually did of the young ruler — “Thy heart is not right in the sight of God.” And with these words Dr. Baugher connects a significant little story, of a man whose life was so exemplary that every one wondered why he did not become a member of the church. He seemed to be such in every thing except the profession. And when that man lay upon his dying bed and was asked by the ambassador of Christ, under whose ministrations he had so often sat, what think you of Christ? the poor man, with conscious knowledge of his own heart and with rare candor, replied: “I hate Him!”²⁰⁴

(2) As man's will has a certain freedom in the direction of the good, so also **in the direction of evil**: *in rebus malis*. In the quotation attributed to Augustine it reads: “Evil, I call such works as

204. *Holman Lectures. First Series*, pp. 711-712.

to have a will to worship an idol, to commit murder, etc." If there was not a certain freedom of man's will in this respect "vulgar Rationalism and horrid Sensualism would not have made such inroads on the moral life of communities." Strictly speaking, it may not be freedom to commit the act of sin, but rather the opposite, a slavery, according to Paul in Romans 7:15: "For that which I do I allow not: for that which I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do." Yet, man is at the same time free. After he has done the evil thing he feels the personal responsibility, he feels that he needs forgiveness. The acts are his own. And there are many degrees of evil. As Quenstedt says, he can choose between this and that spiritual evil in particular.

(3) It is true, will is always free if considered formally. But what is a free will? It is the self-determination of a personality. This self-determination by its nature must always be in accord with the moral quality of the personality. God has a free will, and because He is absolutely perfect in His nature, His self-determination will invariably be good. Likewise the devil's self-determination will always be evil. "The devil lies even when he speaks the truth." If man's nature has become totally sinful, then his self-determination will without a single exception always be sinful."

But here also, regarding civil righteousness and what is the opposite of it, we do not want to overlook the phrase "that man's will has *some* liberty" (*aliquam, etlichermassen*), and that the quotation attributed to Augustine speaks only of a "certain freedom of will," and that in the Apology it reads that the will "can to a certain extent render civil righteousness." As reason is given that "the power of concupiscence

is such that men more frequently obey evil dispositions than sound judgment. And the devil, who is efficacious in the godless, as Paul says (Eph. 2:2), does not cease to incite this feeble nature to various offences." (Apol. 230). According to the setting of words in the quotation believed to be from Augustine in the Confession this phrase "a *certain* freedom of will" must have reference also to the "evil" things. And our Lutheran dogmaticians do teach in the doctrine of providence that God does not always permit an evil intention to become a deed, especially in cases where it would thwart the plans of His government. Therefore He hinders or limits it to a certain degree. Illustrations are Abimelech (Gen. 20:6), Laban (Gen. 31:24), Baalam (Num. 22:12).

2. What can man NOT do before he has been regenerated? In one respect the will of man after the fall and before regeneration is not free. Our Confession reads: "Nevertheless, it has no power, without the Holy Ghost, to work the righteousness of God, that is, spiritual righteousness, since the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:14); but this righteousness is wrought in the heart when the Holy Ghost is received through the Word." "Nature . . . cannot work the inward motions, such as the fear of God, trust in God, chastity, patience, etc." German text: "*Aber ohne Gnad, Hilfe und Wirkung des heiligen Geistes vermag der Mensch nicht Gott gefällig werden, Gott herzlich zu fürchten, oder zu gläuben, oder die angeborne boese Lust aus dem Herzen zu werfen; denn solches geschieht durch den heiligen Geist, welcher durch Gottes Wort gegeben wird. Denn Paulus spricht 1 Cor. 2:14, 'Der natürliche Mensch vernimmt nichts vom Geist Gottes'.*"

a. In the discussion of this statement *let us distinguish* between these two thoughts: (a) There

are things which the unregenerated cannot do; (b) These things are wrought in him through the Holy Spirit.

(1) **Man cannot by his own natural powers “work the inward motions** (*interiores motus non potest efficiere*) which belong to the “righteousness of God, that is, spiritual righteousness,” namely (1) “fear of God” a true fear that cometh out of the heart, therefore in the German: Gott herzlich fürchten; Apology; truly to fear God”; (2) “trust in God” (German: *glauben*; again in the Apology: “truly to believe God, truly to be confident and hold that God regards us, hearkens to us, forgives us, etc.”); (3) the sanctification accompanying true fear and faith: to throw the innate evil lust out of the heart; (German: “*die angeborne böse Lust aus dem Herzen zu werfen*”); chastity, patience, etc.

(2) **“This righteousness is wrought in the heart** (*sed haec fit in cordibus*) when the Holy Ghost is received through the Word.” German: “denn solches *geschieht* durch den heiligen Geist.” According to these statements regeneration or conversion is exclusively the work of the Holy Ghost who works through the Word.

But is not this contradicted by the meaning of another sentence in our article: “It (the Will) has no power *without* the Holy Ghost, to work the righteousness of God,” Does not that mean: the Will has such power *with* the Holy Ghost? Our answer is: When the Confession teaches that the spiritual righteousness is *wrought* in the heart (Latin “fit”; German: “*geschieht*”) then it does, of course, not deny that it is, and must be, man’s own will which is subjected to the divine influence,

and that the decision in conversion is of the will. The fact is to be expressed that the will of the natural man is unable to effect spiritual righteousness; it is done by a decisive influence (Wirkung) of the Holy Ghost. It is the same doctrine which Luther expresses in his interpretation of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him, but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith, etc."

b. Does the Formula of Concord go materially beyond the Augsburg Confession in the doctrine of Free-Will? We know that the F. C. is more outspoken and that it takes pains in guarding against misinterpretations of this doctrine. *But does the F. C. offer a new doctrine?*

(1) The F. C. teaches that there are only two efficient causes of conversion, namely the Holy Ghost and the Word, (580, 12). Man's will must not be coordinated as a third cause (569, 90). Conversion, faith in Christ, regeneration, renewal belong alone to the Holy Ghost and the Word of God as the instrument, "not to the human powers of the natural free will, either entirely, or half, or the least or most inconsiderable part" (557, 25). This is not irreconcilable with Article XVIII of our Confession, and is merely an emphasis of Art. II.

(2) The F. C., quoting Luther, says "that man's will is in his conversion purely passive." (499, 18; 569, 89). Even this phrase, is not against the doctrine of our article. If the spiritual righteousness is "wrought in our heart," and if it

is a "*Wirkung*" of the Holy Ghost, who "renews and purifies us," and if it is God who "imparts life and motion" (Melanchthon, *Scholia on Colossians*), then man's will is passive in the act of conversion.

(3) The F. C. approves of Luther's strong and drastic expressions that in conversion "man is like a pillar of salt, like Lot's wife, yea like a log and a stone, like a lifeless statue" (556, 20). This has often been found offensive, but there was no intention, with these expressions, to say that in conversion God does not act with man as with a personal being. The F. C. says again: "God has . . . a way of working in a man, as in a rational creature, quite different from His way of working in another creature that is irrational or is a stone and block." (564, 62). Therefore the Holy Ghost "effects conversion, not without means, but uses for this purpose the preaching and hearing of God's Word, Rom. 1:16; 10:17" (497, 4). It is "through the heard Word" that God's Spirit "lays hold upon man's will" (500, 20). God draws man "in such a way that his understanding, in place of darkened, becomes enlightened, and his will, in place of perverse, becomes obedient" (564, 60). If man is, with the words of Luther, compared to a "pillar of salt," to "a log and a stone" then such is a description of the spiritual death in which grace finds him: "For man neither sees nor perceives the fierce and terrible wrath of God on account of his sin and death, but he continues even knowingly and willingly in his security, . . . and no prayers, no supplications, no admonitions, yea, also no threats, no reprimands are of any avail; yea all teaching and

preaching are lost upon him, until he is enlightened, converted and regenerated by the Holy Ghost" (556, 21). But while man can "of himself and of his own natural powers" contribute to his own conversion or regeneration "as little as a stone or a block of clay" (556, 24), yet if it comes to God's work in man, then it is "not as a statue is cut in a stone or a seal impressed into wax, which knows nothing of it" (569, 89), but it is a "drawing of the Holy Ghost, God changes stubborn and unwilling into willing men" (569, 88). This is not against the teaching of Article XVIII in the Confession. Even the expression: "It (man's will) has no power, without the Holy Ghost, to work the righteousness of God, etc.," (at the beginning of Article XVIII) has its parallels in the F. C., for instance, when it says, 498, 6: "For, without His grace, and if He do not grant the increase, our willing and running, our planting and watering, all are nothing, as Christ says (John 16:5): 'Without Me, ye can do nothing'."

So our conclusion is that in the F. C. (Article II) there is no doctrine of Free Will materially different from that in Article XVIII of the Confession. It is the original Lutheran doctrine of divine monergism fortified, of course, against the objections of Philipistic Synergism.

3. The Opponents to this Article.

"They condemn the Pelagians and others who teach that, without the Holy Ghost, by the power of nature alone, we are able to love God above all things; also to do the commandments of God as touching 'the substance of the act.'"

a. In the **system of Pelagius** we have the culmination of an heretic tendency in the Greek anthropology. What is freedom of the will? **Augustine said:** "True freedom is where it is no longer necessary to choose between good and evil, where the will moves in the direction of the good, where it does not serve vices and sins. Even when the power to the contrary, or the *possibilitas peccandi*, is given for purposes of probation, the real freedom of the will, according to Augustine, is seen in *not* using it, rather than in using it — in continuing to will the right, and refusing to will the wrong" (Shedd, *Hist. of Doctrines*, vol. 1, 3, par. 3). But **Greek anthropology objected** to this: The freedom of will consists in the *possibilitas usque partis*, in a power of alternative choice; that it can choose with equal facility either of the two contraries, holiness or sin. Freedom as the absolute capacity of choice to determine equally for good or evil, appeared to Pelagius in such a degree to be the substantial good of human nature that he even reckoned the capacity for evil as a *bonum naturae*, since we cannot choose good without in like manner being able to choose evil. (Baur). **We can readily see** that Augustine's conception deals with Free Will as a product of grace, while *Pelagius* defines Free Will as that what the will is by nature, and in the superficiality of his religious ideas thinks that "by the power of nature alone we are able to love God above all things; also to do the commandments of God."²⁰⁵

205. Comp. *Hol. Lect.* First Series, Dr. H. L. Baugher, p. 703 et seqq.

b. When Melanchthon says: "They condemn the Pelagians **and others**," he no doubt thought of the Semi-Pelagianism of the *Roman Catholic Church*, a teaching described with these words in the Formula of Concord: "We reject also the error of the Semi-Pelagians, who teach that man, by his own powers, can make the beginning of his conversion, but without the grace of the Holy Ghost cannot complete it." (498, 10 and 567, 76).

Note 1: Synergism says: God makes the beginning and man responds by his own natural powers. (See F. C. 498, 11 and 567, 77).

Note 2: There is no sect now known under the name of Pelagians, yet Pelagianism permeates all churches that are making concessions to Socinianism, and its ideas are disseminated in the literature of our day and in the public institutions of learning. Pelagianism is in a special sense the religion of the natural man.

ARTICLE NINETEEN

Of the Cause of Sin

Of the Cause of Sin, they teach, that although God doth create and preserve nature, yet the cause of sin is the will of the wicked, that is, of the devil and ungodly men; which will, unaided of God, turns itself from God, as Christ says [John 8:44]: "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own."

De causa peccati docent, quod tametsi Deus creat et conservat naturam, tamen causa peccati est voluntas malorum, videlicet diaboli et impiorum, quae, non adiuvante Deo, avertit se a Deo, sicut Christus ait, Ioh. 8, 44. Quum loquitur mendacium, ex se ipso loquitur.

This article also, like XVIII, is to answer a question suggested by Article II, of Original Sin:

If "all men . . . are born with" sin, *must sin, then, not be charged to the Creator and to Him who preserves sinful nature?* Furthermore, if man

has no Free Will in spiritual things and is unable, out of his own natural powers, to effect his conversion, *does not that indicate a condition for which not man, but God Himself, is responsible?* So this article naturally follows the one that dealt with the problem of Free Will.

1. The Historical Occasion for our Article.

We know that Melanchthon, Luther, and their friends, at first, taught **a certain determinism**.

Melanchthon, in the first edition of his *Loci*,²⁰⁶ undertook to prove the nothingness of man's Free Will by pointing to the necessity with which everything in the life of man occurs according to plans of the omnipotent Creator. *Luther*, in his controversy with Erasmus (1525), fought for the *sola gratia*, against the Semi-Pelagian view that man can, out of his own powers, contribute to his salvation. But among the many gems of truth expressed in his "*De servo arbitrio*" there were some predestinarian sentences. He failed to emphasize the universality of God's saving will and wrote as if some were by divine decree excluded from salvation. *Others of his colaborers* had expressed like views, so Bugenhagen, Linck, Brenz. Linck wrote thus: "God has chosen to redeem some. As if I see before me nuts and pears and select from the number a few, leaving the others . . . Regarding those that have not been chosen nothing helps, even if St. Peter and all angels should preach." And such dealing with man was explained out of God's providence and omnipotent power. This idea especially, which was emphasized by Melanchthon in his *Loci* and in his annotations to Paul on

206. Edition of Plitt, pp. 106-145.

Romans, namely that everything in man's life occurs with absolute necessity, because he is a weak creature and his acts are in all particulars determined by divine omnipotence — these thoughts suggested the conclusion that then man is not responsible for his acts and God is the cause of sin.

Our Reformers, however, had **soon found their bearing** in this problem.

They were not interested in fruitless speculations, but the question of man's salvation, justification by faith, held the central place in their system of doctrines. Here they maintained their well-known Scriptural position that *man cannot out of his own powers effect his regeneration*. This was clear from the Scriptures.

Regarding those other thoughts of man's dependence upon God they soon **began to discriminate** between man as a personal being destined to communion with God, and man as a part of the whole creation.

Regarding man as a personal being, they taught that God has revealed Himself in Christ Jesus as the God of salvation, hating sin, but filled with compassion for the sinner and working to save all.

But regarding *man considered from the side of nature*, as a part of the whole creation, we behold God in His omnipotent power with much mystery about His dealings with men. In Him we live, move and have our being. Even if we sin, they taught, we live and move in God. The unregenerated man who cannot do anything but sin has his strength from God. Yet this does not make Him the cause of sin. In the words of a more modern writer: "God gives the energy for all

action, but the abuse of this energy for sinful ends comes entirely from the creature."²⁰⁷

So the truth remains that God hates sin. Luther wrote (1525) to the Christians in Antwerp: "God has forbidden sin and does not will it. This has been revealed and is necessary to know. But how (in cases like Pharaoh) God can ordain (*verhaengen*) sin over a man, this we shall not know, because He has not revealed it."²⁰⁸ And in another letter Luther calls God's dealing with man "*Gottes Mummerei, darunter er sich verbirgt und in der Welt so wunderbarlich regiert und rumort.*"²⁰⁹ Brentz, in a letter of 1526, calls it "*die heimlich gottlich Cantzlei.*"²¹⁰

With reference to expressions on this subject, and without discrimination as to how those seemingly deterministic expressions of Luther, Melancthon and others had been qualified by subsequent writings, or even in the same writing, and without consideration of the scope of the subject under discussion (for such occasional remarks were never intended to hold a controlling place in the system of doctrines), **the Anabaptists as well as the Papist persisted in charging the Lutherans** with making God the cause of sin. So *Thomas Muenzner* wrote to Luther in 1524: "You make yourselves plainly an arch-devil by proving from Isaiah that God is the cause of sin. That's what you have succeeded in doing with your fantastic speculation following your Augustine. Certainly a blasphemous

207. Jacobs, *Summary of Chr. Faith*, p. 73.

208. Koestlin, *Theology of Luther II*, pp. 277, 280, 292 sq., 301 sq.

209. De Wette, *Briefe II*, 606.

210. Pressel, *Anecdota Brentiana*, p. 26.

doctrine of Free-Will, treating man with contempt."²¹¹ And although this charge has repeatedly been refuted it was raised again by *Dr. Eck* in his pamphlet pointing especially to sentences of Melancthon in his annotations to the Epistle to the Romans.²¹² This was historically the cause for inserting this article and for giving it the place it occupies, following Article XVIII, of Free Will.

2. The Doctrinal Statement shows the natural division of a negative and positive part.

a.—Negative: "Although God doth create and preserve nature, yet" He is not the cause of sin. The aim here is not to make a confessional statement on the doctrine of creation and preservation — not the two words "although" and "yet" — but simply to profess that God is not the cause of sin. This error is frequently based on a *wrong conception of what God's creation and preservation of nature includes.*

(1) In what sense is "nature" here to be taken? In the Latin text we read, "*natura*"; in the German, "*die ganze Natur.*" God has created and preserved "the whole universal nature." There is no difference of thought between the two texts. The German is more comprehensive and we may interpret it even to "exclude as the cause of sin, not only God Himself, but all that He has created, nature in its universal extent, referring sin's origin solely and entirely to the will of the rational creature."²¹³ God is not even indirectly the cause of sin. But this word "nature" specifically includes

211. De Wette III, 63.

212. Plitt II, p. 8, note 2.

213. Dr. Repass in *Holm. Lect.* First Series, p. 727.

human nature. In creating man as he is, God has not laid Himself open to the charge of thereby being the cause of sin.

(2) **A necessary distinction** is to be made, namely between human nature as such, and the corruption of nature. Here was the *mistake of Flacius*, who identified nature and sin too much. On this subject the *Formula of Concord* says (Art. I, p. 545): "Although original sin, like a spiritual poison . . . has corrupted all human nature, so that we cannot clearly show and point out the nature apart by itself, and original sin apart by itself; nevertheless, the . . . essence of the corrupt man . . . or the man himself whom God has created and original sin which dwells in man's nature . . . are not one thing; as . . . the body which is leprous and leprosy . . . are not one thing." *Dr. H. E. Jacobs*: "Man's nature is not sin, but sinful. Much as one may suffer from diphtheria or typhoid fever, no one can be said to be either of these diseases." We should not identify with human nature the vicious quality of sin. Sin is like the mildew on the bread.

(3) **How can God preserve what is evil?** Does not that show that He wills the existence of sin? It is *not sin* that God preserves or intends to preserve, *but the human nature*, the person. It is yet possible that the sinner can be cleansed from his sin. Regarding *man's creation* there was the possibility of his fall. But that did not keep God from creating man. The possibility of falling into sin was included in God's plan of redemption. This explains also His preservation of sinful humanity. If the sinner is the object of God's preservation and

if, according to our old Dogmaticians, we can speak of a *certain concurrence* of God regarding the sinful acts of men, even this does not make God the cause of sin. "If the murderer raises his hand, then the strength is from God, but in the sin itself God has no part." Compare here what our Dogmaticians taught concerning "Permission," "Hindrance," "Direction," "Determination." See under Art. XVIII, p. 268.

b. Positive statement: Although God is the Creator and Preserver of the whole nature and of human nature in particular, "yet the cause of sin is the will of the wicked, that is the devil and ungodly men." *The possibility of sinning was in the nature of the will.*²¹⁴

If God had created animals, plants or minerals instead of man there would have been no possibility of a fall. But He created angels and man, who could use their will in choosing the wrong.

(1) How does the choice of sin take place? "Which will, unaided of God, turns itself from God, as Christ says (John 8:44): 'When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own.'" The responsibility for the fall and for every sin after the fall is altogether on the part of creature: the devil and the wicked, who turn away from God.

"*Non adjuvante Deo*," unaided of God — this remarkable and much discussed phrase means that God did not put anything into the will that in the moments of temptation decision must fall in the fatal direction. But neither does God decide for man in the sense that He relieves him of the struggle in the hour of temptation.

214. Comp. our interpretation of Article XVIII.

(2) **How did it come about that our first parents fell into sin**, so that from now on the will of man can be called the cause of sin (i. e., of the actual sin)?

To be noted is that the will of **the devil is mentioned first**. This is the *first* cause of sin. The temptation from the devil accounts for the fall of man and for the condition of his will which now again becomes in a secondary way a cause of actual sins.

But this does not answer *all* of the question. We can understand that after once the fall had taken place and there were sinning men with sinning wills in the world that sin would perpetuate itself; but *how was it possible that in Adam and Eve, through the temptation of the devil, the first evil desire could be begotten, considering the state of absolute purity from sin in which they had been created?* When Eve was looking with desire at the forbidden tree (the teachers of the Medieval Age called it *delectatio morosa*)²¹⁵ and the representations of the serpent began to take hold of her, **was there not already in Eve something sinful**, an *ἐπιθυμία* by which she was meeting the tempter half way? And would we not have to attribute such lust, or let us call it receptivity for temptation, to the Creator and so after all have God as a cause of sin?

Here we must remember what the "Original Righteousness," or holiness meant, in which the first man was created. **We must not make the first man a divine being**. Luthardt says: "Our old teachers perhaps overdid it in attributing per-

215. Cf. Martensen, *Ethics*, on this term.

fection to the original state of man. For by putting too much into man's original state they made a real progress impossible."²¹⁶ They (especially Baier, Calovius, Hollaz) clearly went beyond Luther and the Confessions. The Apology says in a famous passage: "Original Righteousness implies not only an equable temperament of the bodily qualities, but also these gifts, viz., a more certain knowledge of God, fear of God, confidence in God, or a certain rectitude *and power of attaining them.*" Luther called this condition of the first man an "*innocentia puerilis*" that was to grow into the "*innocentia virilis.*"²¹⁷ True, we must **not go too far in this direction and make the original man a moral neuter** ("*ein sittliches Neutrum,*" Luthardt). With a purity from sin he was started in the direction of God, with an active conscience, striving after truth and real freedom. But he was a *sensual nature* ("*sensu medio*"), with the faculty of imagination, capable of receiving impressions of the good as well as the evil. This was *in itself something indifferent and it only became sinful* when the tempter succeeded in turning the will in the direction of the evil.

(3) How could there be a fall into sin among the angels? How could the devil beget sin within himself with no temptation from an outside power? He must have been a good creature of God, as Scripture excludes any kind of dualism. This *old speculative question* of the πόθεν τὸ κακόν (whence cometh the evil?) is not answered in this

216. Luthardt, *Glaubenslehre*, p. 97. As illustrations compare Schmidt, § 24, notes 8, 10-11.

217. Comp. A. v. Oettingen, *Dogmatik* II, 391.

article. Our Confession confines itself to practical purposes and at the close of the article only quotes the statement from John 8:44, "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own." This is to guard against the supposition that God should in any way be the cause of sin in the devil.

Note: **No errorists** are mentioned in connection with this article. The *Roman Catholic Church* might have been mentioned with its view that sensuality is the essence of sin. The flesh in itself was considered evil and had to be mortified by monastic efforts. Since God is the Creator of human nature (including man's body, his flesh) such a view would make Him the cause of sin. Yet no mention of this Gnostic-Manichean error, of which even Augustine could not rid himself, was made at this place, because Rome had no intention of teaching this error. *Clearer cases* of making God the cause of sin we have later in the Calvinistic doctrine of Predestination in its supralapsarian form, and later yet in the religious views of men like Schiller, Hegel and others (*Protestantenverein*), who held that the evil in the first man was a necessary part of his being, without which a motion, a history, a development in the desired direction would have been impossible.

ARTICLE TWENTY

Of Good Works

We do not print the text of this article because of its length. In the nature of its discussion, i. e. with reference to form (not with reference to its contents) it belongs into one class with the articles of the second part of the Confession (XXII to XXVIII), which are all treated in a lengthy discussion. For the text, we must, therefore, refer to the Book of Concord (People's Edition) by Dr. Jacobs.

This article also, like XVIII and XIX, was written for supplementary purposes. It is a further exposition of Article VI on the New Obedience. The draft of May 31st did not yet contain this article (cf. p. 82), but in the counsel of our Confessors it was decided that it should be added for the purpose of meeting the persistent objection of

the Romanists, that the doctrine of Justification quenches the striving after righteousness of life. It is the longest article of the first part of the Confession. There is no aim at the brevity that is characteristic of all articles of the doctrinal part, but Melancthon has employed the form of discussion as we find it in the second part of the Confession and in the Apology. We shall here content ourselves with a mere outline, because all is self-explanatory and itself an exposition of the central thought of the Confession.²¹⁸

1. The Accusation that the doctrine of Justification by Faith kills the striving after Righteousness of Life is false, because it is manifest that the writings of Luther and his brethren have given a new impulse even to the preaching of the opponents who now lay more emphasis upon the things which the Word of God demands concerning the daily life of the Christian, in place of the unnecessary things that were preached before (on holy days, fasts, pilgrimages, the use of rosaries, etc.).

II. The Roman Doctrine concerning Works is false and harmful for the following four reasons:

1. *It casts contempt upon Christ,* and man invents a way of his own for salvation, notwithstanding Christ has said: I am the way (John 14:6).

218. The outline which we offer is the same as contained in the book which we wrote for laymen "The Augsburg Confession," p. 139 ff. and was there taken over from a book published in Heidelberg (Germany) by Carl Winter's Universitaetsbuchhandlung for a layman who was too modest to give his name. It is the book which Dr. J. E. Whitteker has made the basis for his excellent little work on the Augsburg Confession,

2. *It leaves the troubled conscience without comfort and peace* ("Heretofore consciences were plagued with the doctrine of works," etc.).

3. *It leaves out of consideration that without faith and outside of Christ and without the Holy Ghost, we are too weak to do works pleasing to God*: "Without Me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

4. *In connection with it is held that faith signifies "merely the knowledge of the history, such as it is in the ungodly and the devil."*

III. Over against these Negative Statements our article asserts in a more positive way the following three things:

1. This doctrine is *divinely true*, because

(a) It is taught in the Gospel, especially by Paul. (Eph. 2:8).

(b) It is the old doctrine "supported by the testimonials of the fathers." Augustine and Ambrose are quoted.

2. This doctrine is *necessary*, because

(a) It represents the most fundamental things in Christianity;

(b) It gives peace to the timid and terrified consciences ("but because this doctrine is despised by the inexperienced, nevertheless," etc.);

(c) It does not lose sight of the essence of faith, which is confidence in God, and the trust that in Christ we have the forgiveness of sins.

3. This is a *safe doctrine*,

(a) Because on the one hand it teaches us about real good works, *not* that we should put our trust in them and try to merit grace, *but* that by doing them we should honor and glorify God;

(b) Because, on the other hand, we are taught that God *not only* wants such works, *but also* that through faith He gives us the Holy Ghost who endows us with strength to lead a holy life.

Conclusion: For all these reasons the opponents ought to praise this doctrine of faith and should not undertake to persecute those who have accepted it.

ARTICLE TWENTY-ONE

Of the Worship of Saints

Of the Worship of Saints, they teach, that the memory of saints may be set before us, that we may follow their faith and good works, according to our calling, as the Emperor may follow the example of David in making war to drive away the Turk from his country. For both are kings. But the Scripture teaches not the invocation of saints, or to ask help of saints, since it sets before us Christ, as the only Mediator, Propitiation, High Priest and Intercessor. He is to be prayed to, and hath promised that He will hear our prayer; and this worship He approves above all, to-wit, that in all afflictions He be called upon [1 John 2:1]: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father," etc.

De cultu sanctorum docent, quod memoria sanctorum proponi potest, ut imitemur fidem eorum et bona opera iuxta vocationem, ut Caesar imitari potest exemplum Davidis in bello ad depellendos Turcas a patria. Nam uterque rex est. Sed scriptura non docet invocare sanctos, seu petere auxilium a sanctis, quia unum Christum nobis proponit mediatorem, propitiatorium, pontificem, et intercessorem. Hic invocandus est, et promisit se exauditurum esse preces nostras, et hunc cultum maxime probat, videlicet ut invocetur in omnibus afflictionibus. 1 Ioh. 2, 1. Si quis peccat, habemus advocatum apud Deum cet.

The question has been asked, **why this article was not placed in the second part of the Con-**

fession, which deals with the abuses of the Roman Church. But Melancthon meant this to be a *doctrinal* article. Dr. M. Loy says: "As in the twentieth article the meritorious character of our works is denied, so here the Scriptural ground for human mediators and intercessors."²¹⁹ **The lesson** is: *Jesus Christ is the only Mediator*. This leads us to classify this article with Article III on the Son of God.

It is of interest to know that **Luther at Coburg was very much concerned** about having an article on the invocation of saints among the confessional statements of the purified Church. Not only do we find an article on that subject in the so-called Torgau Articles in the conception of which Luther must have participated (cf. page 6), but we know it also from a letter which he wrote at Coburg to Dr. Jonas, during the Augsburg diet. He had been informed that after the Confession had been delivered the emperor with the Roman Catholic princes and divines had asked the Protestants whether the articles comprised all the differences from the traditional Church, or whether there were more. To this Luther replied in his forceful manner: "I see what this means. The devil is yet alive, and it has not escaped him that your Apology — so the Augsb. Conf. was at first called — steps softly (*leise tritt*) and that the articles concerning purgatory, *invocation of saints*, and the Pope as Antichrist have been passed over in silence."²²⁰ But our article on saint

219. *Augsb. Conf.*, p. 898.

220. De Wette, *Luthers Briefe* IV, 110; Enders, *Briefwechsel* VIII,

worship *was* in the Confession.²²¹ Endeavoring to explain Luther's remark, Kolde thinks that Luther must have overlooked this brief article in its position between the two long Articles XX and XXII. Be that as it may, to us it is of interest that *Luther wanted this article*. It was an important one at that time. And even to-day we could not do without it in our Confession. For on this subject Roman Catholicism has hardened its heart against the truly evangelical testimony of our fathers. Therefore, this testimony of our article must continue as long as such gross error is maintained and saints are substituted for Christ as mediators between God and man.

This article discriminates between **a true and a false veneration of the saints**. The first is *commanded*, the second is *rejected*.

1. The True Veneration of Saints consists in this that we shall

(a) Remember them for the *strengthening of our faith*. When we see how God has helped the sainted men and women of the Bible it shall inspire us with confidence that He will not forsake us.

(b) Their good works shall be *an example* to us for imitation. And each one in his own calling may here choose a special saint for imitation, as for instance "the Emperor may follow the example of David in making war in driving the Turk from his country"; or a teacher of the divine Word may choose Paul, or a student Timothy, etc. (Apology).

2. But the false Veneration of Saints is re-

221. It was not yet written when Luther received the "first draft", of May 11th; but it was in the copy which Luther received immediately after the public delivery on June 25th.

jected, which consists in this that we call on them in prayer and make them mediators before God. This is an abuse which, as Melanchthon says in his Apology, is heathen in character.²²²

a) Such prayer is *not commanded in Scripture*, nor can it be substantiated by Scripture, because there we are led to Christ.

b) There is no *divine promise* that such prayer shall be heard.

Note 1: The Apology goes more into details on this article. There also **Mary** is mentioned, which was wisely omitted in the Confession. The veneration for the "Mother of God" was so great with the Romanists that any mention of her in connection with the rejection of saint worship would have met with special indignation. But at the time of the writing of the Apology the conciliatory policy with respect to Rome was abandoned even by Melanchthon.

Note 2: In the "Holman Lecture" on this article which I gave at the Theological Seminary at Gettysburg and which was published in the Lutheran Quarterly of July, 1909, I have treated this article at length as follows: 1) The gradual growth of saint worship and the form of this error at the eve of the Reformation; 2) Luther's development regarding the invocation of saints, and how Melanchthon framed the result of it in our article;²²³ 3) Our article in the fire of Roman criticism, and how it was defended (namely by Melanchthon during the discussions that followed the reading of the Confutation in the committee appointed by the emperor for purposes of conciliation²²⁴ in the Apology, in the *Repetitio Confessionis Augustanae*, and by Martin Chemnitz in his *Examen Concilii Tridentini*).

222. Comp. K. A. v. Hase, *Handbuch der protestantischen Polemik*, p. 307: "Inside of a monotheistic religion the worship of saints has satisfied a polytheistic need by bridging over the immense distance between man and God." See also Bonwetch, in Hauck's *R. E.* VII, 555; Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte* II, 448; Schultz, *Geschichte des griechisch-romischen Heidentums* II, 351.

223. Koestlin, *Theology of Luther* I, 466; 468.

224. See introduction to Apology, p. 295; also Dr. J. W. Richard in *Luth. Quarterly* of Oct., 1900.

PART II

ARTICLES, IN WHICH ARE REVIEWED THE ABUSES WHICH HAVE BEEN CORRECTED

Inasmuch as our churches dissent in no article of the (1) Faith from the Church Catholic, but omit some Abuses which are new, and which have been erroneously accepted by fault of the times, contrary to the intent of the Canons, we pray that Your Imperial Majesty would graciously hear both what has been changed, and also what were the reasons, in order that the people be not compelled to observe those abuses against their conscience. Nor should Your Imperial Majesty (2) believe those, who, in order to excite the hatred of men against our part, disseminate strange slanders among our people. Having thus excited the minds of good men, they (3) have first given occasion to this controversy, and now endeavor, by the same arts, to increase the discord. For your (4) Imperial Majesty will undoubtedly find that the form of doctrine and of ceremonies with us, is not so intolerable as these ungodly and malicious men represent. Furthermore, (5) the truth cannot be gathered from common rumors, or the revilings of our enemies. But it can readily be judged that (6) nothing would serve better to maintain the dignity of worship, and to nourish reverence and pious devotion among the people than that the ceremonies be rightly observed in the churches.

THE PROLOGUE

This introduction is addressed to the Emperor with the view to conciliate him and at the same time to open his eyes to the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church. He is addressed most respectfully as "Your Imperial Majesty." The appeal states:

1. That the Lutheran churches did not dissent from the Church Catholic (1)

2. That some abuses had been omitted in the presentation of the articles of faith (1)

3. That the Emperor should give consideration:

(1) To the changes which had been made (1)

(2) To the reasons for these changes (1)

4. That the Emperor should refuse to hear those who were disseminating false accusations (2)

5. That truth cannot be determined by rumors (5)

6. That the proper observance of the ceremonies produces piety and reverence (6)

I. OF BOTH KINDS

(ARTICLE XXII)

To the laity are given Both Kinds in the Sacrament of the (1) Lord's Supper, because this usage has the commandment of the Lord [in Matt. 26:27]: "Drink ye all of it"; where (2) Christ has manifestly commanded concerning the cup that all should drink; and lest any man should craftily say that this (3) refers only to priests, Paul [in 1 Cor. 11:27] recites an example from which it appears that the whole congregation did use both kinds. And this usage has long remained in the (4) Church, nor is it known when, or by whose authority, it was changed; although Cardinal Cusanus mentions the time when it was approved. Cyprian in some places testifies that the (5) Blood was given to the people. The same is testified by (6) Jerome, who says: "The priests administer the Eucharist, and distribute the Blood of Christ to the people." Indeed, (7) Pope Gelasius commands that the Sacrament be not divided (*Dist. ii., De Consecratione, Cap. Comperimus*). Only custom, (8) not so ancient, has it otherwise. But it is evident that any (9) custom introduced against the commandments of God is not to be allowed, as the Canons witness (*Dist. iii., Cap.*

Veritate, and the following chapters). But this custom (10) has been received, not only against the Scripture but also against the old Canons and examples of the Church. Therefore (11) if any preferred to use both kinds of the Sacrament, they ought not to have been compelled with offence to their consciences to do otherwise.

And because the division of the Sacrament does not agree (12) with the ordinance of Christ, we are accustomed to omit the procession, which hitherto has been in use.

1. The laity has the right to receive both elements (1)

2. This usage has ancient support:

(1) The Scriptures: Matthew 26:27; 1 Cor. 11:26-28 (2, 3)

(2) Early Church teachers: Cyprian, Jerome, etc. (5, 6)

(3) Canons of the early Church (9)

3. The custom of using one element only:

(1) Not supported by age (8)

(2) Contrary to the Scriptures (10)

(3) Contrary to the Canons and example of the Church (10)

4. Reason for omitting the procession:

(1) Not in harmony with Christ's institution (12)

(2) It separates the Sacrament (12)

II. OF THE MARRIAGE OF PRIESTS

(ARTICLE XXIII)

There has been common complaint concerning the examples (1) of Priests, who were not chaste. For that reason also, (2) Pope Pius is reported to have said that there were certain reasons why marriage was taken away from priests,

but that there were far weightier ones why it ought to be given back; for so Platina writes. Since, therefore, our priests are desirous (3) to avoid these open scandals they married wives, and taught that it was lawful for them to contract matrimony. First, because Paul says [1 Cor. 7:2]: "To avoid fornication, (4) let every man have his own wife." Also [9]: "It is better to marry than to burn." Secondly, Christ says [Matt. 19:11]: (5) "All men cannot receive this saying," where he teaches that not all men are fit to lead a single life; for God created man for procreation [Gen. 1:28]. Nor is it in man's power, (6) without a singular gift and work of God, to alter this creation. Therefore those that are not fit to lead a single life ought to (7) contract matrimony. For no man's law, no vow, can annul (8) the commandment and ordinance of God. For these reasons (9) the priests teach that it is lawful for them to marry wives. It is also evident that in the ancient Church priests were married (10) men. For Paul says [1 Tim. 3:2] that a bishop should (11) be the husband of one wife. And in Germany, four hundred (12) years ago for the first time, the priests were violently compelled to lead a single life, who indeed offered such resistance that the Archbishop of Mayence, when about to publish the Pope's decree concerning this matter, was almost killed in the tumult raised by the enraged priests. And so harsh was (13) the dealing in the matter that not only were marriages forbidden for the time to come, but also existing marriages were torn asunder, contrary to all laws, divine and human, contrary even to the Canons themselves, made not only by the Popes but by most celebrated Councils.

Seeing also that, as the world is aging, man's nature is (14) gradually growing weaker, it is well to guard that no more vices steal into Germany. Furthermore, God ordained marriage (15) to be a help against human infirmity. The Canons (16) themselves say that the old rigor ought now and then, in the latter times, to be relaxed because of the weakness of men; which is to be devoutly wished were done also in this matter. And it is to be expected that the churches shall at (17) length lack pastors, if marriage should be any longer forbidden.

But while the commandment of God is in force, while the (18) custom of the Church is well known, while impure celibacy causes many scandals, adulteries, and other crimes deserving the punishments of just magistrates, yet it is a marvellous thing that in nothing is more cruelty exercised than against the marriage of priests. God had given a commandment to (19) honor marriage. By the laws of all well-ordered commonwealth (20) even among the heathen, marriage is most highly (21) honored. But now men, and also priests, are cruelly put to death, contrary to the intent of the Canons, for no other cause (22) than marriage. Paul [in 1 Tim. 4:3] calls that a doctrine of devils, which forbids marriage. This may now be readily understood when the law against marriage is maintained by (23) such penalties.

But as no law of man can annul the commandment of (24) God, so neither can it be done by any vow. Accordingly (25) Cyprian also advises that women who do not keep the chastity they have promised should marry. His words are these [Book I., Epistle xi.]: "But if they be unwilling or unable to persevere, it is better for them to marry than fall into the fire of lusts; at least, they should give no offence to their brethren and sisters." And even the Canons show some (26) leniency toward those who have taken vows before the proper age, as heretofore has generally been the case.

1. Priests should be permitted to marry (1, 3)
2. Scandals have arisen because of unchastity (2)
3. The Scriptures justify the marriage of priests (4-9)
4. The early Church permitted them to marry (10)
5. God has given commandment concerning marriage (15)
6. Vows of celibacy are not above God's commandment (18)

7. Celibacy is a comparatively new thing (22)
 8. Human laws cannot change God's commandment (24)
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III. OF THE MASS

(ARTICLE XXIV)

Falsely are our churches accused of Abolishing the Mass; (1) for the Mass is retained on our part, and celebrated with the highest reverence. All the usual ceremonies are also preserved, (2) save that the parts sung in Latin are interspersed here and there with German hymns, which have been added to teach the people. For ceremonies are needed to this end (3) alone, that the unlearned be taught. And not only has Paul (4) commanded to use in the Church a language understood by the people [1 Cor. 14:2, 9], but it has also been so ordained by man's law.

The people are accustomed to partake of the Sacrament together, (5) if any be fit for it, and this also increases the reverence and devotion of public worship. For none are admitted (6) except they be first proved. The people are also advised concerning (7) the dignity and use of the Sacrament, how great consolation it brings anxious consciences, that they may learn to believe God, and to expect and ask of Him all that is good. This worship pleases God; such use of the Sacrament nourishes (8) true devotion toward God. It does not, therefore, appear that the Mass is more devoutly celebrated among our adversaries than among us.

But it is evident that for a long time, it has been the public (10) and most grievous complaint of all good men, that Masses have been basely profaned and applied to purposes of lucre. For it is not unknown how far this abuse obtains in all the (11) churches, by what manner of men Masses are said only for fees or stipends, and how many celebrate them contrary (12) to the Canons. But Paul severely threatens those who deal unworthily with the Eucharist, when he says [1 Cor. 11:27]: "Whosoever shall eat of this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." When,

therefore, our priests were admonished (13) concerning this sin, Private Masses were discontinued among us, as scarcely any Private Masses were celebrated except for lucre's sake.

Neither were the bishops ignorant of these abuses, and if (14) they had corrected them in time, there would now be less dissension. Heretofore, by their own negligence, they suffered (15) many corruptions to creep into the Church. Now, when it is (16) too late, they begin to complain of the troubles of the Church, seeing that this disturbance has been occasioned simply by those abuses, which are so manifest that they could be borne no longer. Great dissensions have arisen concerning the (17) Mass, concerning the Sacrament. Perhaps the world is being (18) punished for such long-continued profanations of the Mass, as have been tolerated in the churches for so many centuries, by the very men who were both able and in duty bound to correct them. For, in the Ten Commandments, it is written (19) (Exodus 20), "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." But since the world began, nothing (20) that God ever ordained seems to have been so abused for filthy lucre as the Mass.

There was also added the opinion which infinitely increased (21) Private Masses, namely, that Christ, by His passion, had made satisfaction for original sin, and instituted the Mass wherein an offering should be made for daily sins, venial and mortal. From this has arisen the common opinion that the (22) Mass taketh away the sins of the living and the dead, by the outward act. Then they began to dispute whether one Mass (23) said for many were worth as much as special Masses for individuals, and this brought forth that infinite multitude of Masses. Concerning these opinions our teachers have given (24) warning, that they depart from the Holy Scriptures and diminish the glory of the passion of Christ. For Christ's (25) passion was an oblation and satisfaction, not for original guilt (26) only, but also for all sins, as it is written to the Hebrews (10:10), "We are sanctified through the offering of Jesus Christ, once for all." Also, 10:14: "By one offering He (27) hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Scripture (28) also teaches that we are justified before God through faith in

Christ, when we believe that our sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. Now if the Mass take away the sins of the living and (29) the dead by the outward act, justification comes of the work of Masses, and not of faith, which Scripture does not allow.

But Christ commands us [Luke 22:19], "This do in (30) remembrance of me"; therefore the Mass was instituted that the faith of those who use the Sacrament should remember what benefits it receives through Christ, and cheer and comfort the anxious conscience. For, to remember Christ, is (31) to remember His benefits, and to realize that they are truly offered unto us. Nor is it enough only to remember the history, (32) for this the Jew and the ungodly also can remember. Therefore the Mass is to be used to this end, and there the (33) Sacrament [Communion] may be administered to them that have need of consolation, as Ambrose says: "Because I always sin, I am always bound to take the medicine."

Now forasmuch as the Mass is such a giving of the Sacrament, (34) we hold one communion every holyday, and also other days, when any desire the Sacrament it is given to such as ask for it. And this custom is not new in the Church; for (35) the Fathers before Gregory make no mention of any private Mass, but of the common Mass [the Communion] they speak very much. Chrysostom says that the priest stands daily at (36) the altar, inviting some to the Communion and keeping back others. And it appears from the ancient Canons, that some one (37) celebrated the Mass from whom all the other presbyters and deacons received the Body of the Lord; for thus the words of the Nicene Canon say: "Let the deacons, according (38) to their order, receive the Holy Communion after the presbyters, from the bishop or from a presbyter." And Paul (39) [1 Cor. 11:33] commands concerning the Communion: "Tarry one for another," so that there may be a common participation.

Forasmuch, therefore, as the Mass with us has the example (40) of the Church, taken from the Scripture and the Fathers, we are confident that it cannot be disapproved, especially since the public ceremonies are retained for the

most part, like those hitherto in use; only the number of Masses differ, which, because of very great and manifest abuses, doubtless might be profitably reduced. For in olden times, even in churches (41) most frequented, the Mass was not celebrated every day, as the Tripartite History (Book 9, chapt. 33) testifies: "Again in Alexandria, every Wednesday and Friday, the Scriptures are read, and the doctors expound them, and all things are done, except only the celebration of the Eucharist."

1. Refutation of charges of abolishing the Mass (1-9)

- (1) The Mass is retained in the churches (1)
- (2) It is celebrated with reverence (1)
- (3) All usual ceremonies are preserved, except that the vernacular has been introduced, and this for good reasons (4)
- (4) The Mass is properly observed: (5-7)
 - a. Communicants are examined (6)
 - b. Advice is given (7)

2. Charges of abuse presented (10-24)

- (1) Masses are profaned (10)
 - a. By fees and stipends (11)
 - b. By improper celebration (12)
- (2) Bishops were not ignorant of this profanation (14)
- (3) Private Masses provoke dissensions (23)
- (4) Scriptures and Church not in agreement (24)

3. Private Mass abolished (25-39)

- (1) On the basis of Scriptural authority (25)

(2) On the authority of the early Church
(35)

4. The proper observance of the Sacrament
(40)

IV. OF CONFESSION

(ARTICLE XXV)

Confession in our churches is not abolished; for it is not (1) usual to give the Body of the Lord, except to them that have been previously examined and absolved. And the people are (2) most carefully taught concerning the faith and assurance of absolution, about which, before this time, there was profound silence. Our people are taught that they should (3) highly prize the absolution, as being the voice of God, and pronounced by His command. The power of the Keys is (4) commended, and we show what great consolation it brings to anxious consciences; that God requires faith to believe such absolution as a voice sounding from Heaven, and that such faith in Christ truly obtains and receives the forgiveness of sins.

Aforetime, satisfactions were immoderately extolled; of (5) faith and the merit of Christ, and the righteousness of faith, no mention was made; therefore, on this point, our churches are by no means to be blamed. For this even our adversaries (6) must needs concede to us, that the doctrine concerning repentance has been most diligently treated and laid upon by our teachers.

But of Confession, they teach, that an enumeration of sins (7) is not necessary, and that consciences be not burdened with anxiety to enumerate all sins, for it is impossible to recount all sins, as the Psalm testifies [19:13]: "Who can understand his errors?" Also Jeremiah [17:9]: "The heart is (8) deceitful, who can know it?" But if no sins were forgiven, (9) except those that are recounted, consciences could never find peace, for very many sins they neither see, nor can remember.

The ancient writers also testify that an enumeration is not (10) necessary. For, in the Decrees, Chrysostom is quoted, who (11) thus says: "I say not to thee, that thou shouldst disclose thyself in public, nor that thou accuse thyself before others, but I would have thee obey the prophet who says: 'Disclose thy way before God.' Therefore confess thy sins before God, the true Judge, with prayer. Tell thine errors, not with the tongue, but with the memory of thy conscience." And the (12) Gloss ("Of Repentance," *Distinct. v. Cap. Consideret*) admits that Confession of human right only. Nevertheless, on account (13) of the great benefits of absolution, and because it is otherwise useful to the conscience, Confession is retained among us.

1. Lutheran practices (1-6)

- (1) Confession is not abolished (1)
- (2) Sacrament administered only to those examined (2)
- (3) The people are taught to reverence the absolution (2)
- (4) The power of the Keys commended (4)
- (5) Faith is required (4)

2. Teaching concerning confession (7-13)

- (1) Enumeration of sins not necessary (7)
- (2) Scriptures do not require it (8)
- (3) The early Church did not require it (10)
- (4) Confession is of human right (12)
- (5) Confession is retained because of absolution and of its usefulness for the conscience (13)

V. OF DISTINCTION OF MEATS AND OF TRADITIONS

(ARTICLE XXVI)

It has been the general persuasion, not of the people (1) alone, but also of such as teach in the churches, that making Distinctions of Meats, and like traditions of men, are works profitable to merit grace, and able to make satisfactions for sins. And that the world so thought, appears from this, (2) that new ceremonies, new orders, new holydays, and new fastings were daily instituted, and the teachers in the churches did exact these works as a service necessary to merit grace, and did greatly terrify men's consciences, if they should omit any of these things. For this persuasion concerning traditions, much detriment has resulted in the Church.

First, the doctrine of grace and of the righteousness of faith (4) has been obscured by it, which is the chief part of the Gospel, and ought to stand out, as the most prominent in the Church, that the merit of Christ may be well known, and that faith, which believes that sins are forgiven for Christ's sake may be exalted far above works. Wherefore Paul also lays the (5) greatest stress on this article, putting aside the law and human traditions, in order to show that the righteousness of the Christian is another than such works, to wit, the faith which believes that sins are freely forgiven for Christ's sake. But this doctrine of Paul has been almost wholly smothered (6) by traditions, which have produced an opinion that, by making distinctions in meats and like services, we must merit grace and righteousness. In treating of repentance, there (7) was no mention made of faith; all that was done was to set forth those works of satisfaction, and in these all repentance seemed to consist.

Secondly, these traditions have obscured the commandments (8) of God; because traditions were placed far above the commandments of God. Christianity was thought to consist wholly in the observance of certain holydays, fasts and vestures. These observances had won for themselves the (9) exalted title of being the spiritual life and the perfect life. Meanwhile the commandments of God, according to each (10) one's calling, were without honor,

namely, that the father brought up his family, that the mother bore children, that the Prince governed the Commonwealth,—these were accounted works that were worldly and imperfect, and far below those glittering observances. And this error greatly tormented (11) devout consciences, which grieved that they were bound by an imperfect state of life, as in marriage, in the office of magistrate, or in other civil ministrations; on the other hand, they admired the monks and such like, and falsely imagined that the observances of such men were more acceptable to God.

Thirdly, tradition brought great danger to consciences; (12) for it was impossible to keep all traditions, and yet men judged these observances to be necessary acts of worship. Gerson writes that many fell into despair, and that some (13) even took their own lives, because they felt that they were not able to satisfy the traditions; and meanwhile, they heard not the consolation of the righteousness of faith and grace.

We see that the summists and theologians gather the traditions (14) together, and seek mitigations whereby to ease consciences, and yet they do not succeed in releasing them, but sometimes entangle consciences even more. And with the (15) gathering of these traditions, the schools and sermons have been so much occupied that they have had no leisure to touch upon Scripture, and to seek the more profitable doctrine of faith, of the cross, of hope, of the dignity of civil affairs, of consolation of sorely tried consciences. Hence (16) Gerson, and some other theologians, have grievously complained, that by these strivings concerning traditions, they were prevented from giving attention to a better kind of doctrine. Augustine also forbids that men's consciences (17) should be burdened with such observances, and prudently advises Januarius, that he must know that they are to be observed as things indifferent; for these are his words.

Wherefore our teachers must not be looked upon as having (18) taken up this matter rashly, or from hatred of the bishops, as some falsely suspect. There was great need to warn the (19) churches of these errors, which had risen from misunderstanding the traditions. For the Gospel compels us to insist (20) in the churches upon the doctrine

of grace, and of the righteousness of faith; which, however, cannot be understood, if men think that they merit grace by observances of their own choice.

Thus, therefore, they have taught, that by the observance (21) of human traditions we cannot merit grace, or be justified; and hence we must not think such observances necessary acts of worship.

They add hereunto testimonies of Scripture. Christ [Matt. 15:3] (22) defends the Apostles who had not observed the usual traditions, which however, seemed to pertain to a matter not unlawful, but indifferent, and to have a certain affinity with the purifications of the law, and says [9]: "In vain do they worship me with the commandments of men." He, therefore, (23) does not exact an unprofitable service. Shortly after, he adds [11]: "Not that which goeth into the mouth, defileth (24) a man." So also Paul [Rom. 15:17]: "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink." [Col. 2:16]: "Let no man (25) therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of any holyday, or of the Sabbath day"; also [v. 20, sq.]: "If ye be (26) dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, touch not, taste not, handle not?" And Peter says [Acts 15:10] (27): "Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers, nor we were able to bear; but we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Here Peter (28) forbids to burden the consciences with many rites either of Moses, or of others.

And in 1 Tim. [4:1, 3], Paul calls the prohibition of (29) meats a doctrine of the devils; for it is against the Gospel to institute or do such works that by them we may merit grace, or as though Christianity could not exist without such service of God.

Here our adversaries cast up that our teachers are opposed (30) to discipline and mortification of the flesh, as Jovinian. But the contrary may be learned from the writings of our teachers. For they have always taught concerning the (31) cross, that it behooves Christians to bear afflictions. This is (32) the true, earnest and unfeigned

mortification, to wit, to be exercised with divers afflictions, and to be crucified with Christ.

Moreover, they teach, that every Christian ought to exercise (33) and subdue himself with bodily restraints and labors, that neither plenty nor slothfulness tempt him to sin, but not that we may merit grace or make satisfaction for sins by such exercises. And such external discipline ought to be urged (34) at all times, not only on a few and set days. So Christ (35) commands [Luke 21:34]: "Take heed, lest your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting"; also [Matt. 17:21]: "This (36) kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." Paul also (37) says [1 Cor. 9:27]: "I keep under by body and bring it into subjection." Here he clearly shows that he was keeping (38) under his body not to merit forgiveness of sins by that discipline, but to have his body in subjection and fitted for spiritual things, and for the discharge of duty according to his calling. Therefore, we do not condemn fasting, but the traditions (39) which prescribe certain days and certain meats, with peril of conscience, as though works of such kinds were a necessary service.

Nevertheless, very many traditions are kept on our part, (40) which conduce to good order in the Church, as the Order of Lessons in the Mass, and the chief holydays. But, at the (41) same time, men are warned that such observances do not justify before God, and that, in such things, it should not be made sin if they be omitted without scandal. Such liberty (42) in human rites was not unknown to the Fathers. For in the (43) East they kept Easter at another time than at Rome, and when, on account of this diversity, the Romans accused the Eastern Church of schism, they were admonished by others that such usages need not be alike everywhere. And (44) Irenaeus says: "Diversity concerning fasting does not destroy the harmony of faith." As also Pope Gregory intimates in *Dist. xii.*, that such diversity does not violate the unity of the Church. And in the Tripartite History, Book 9, many examples (45) of dissimilar rites are gathered, and the following statement is made: "It was not the mind of the Apostles to enact rules concerning holydays, but to preach godliness and a holy life."

1. Traditions of work-righteousness are false (1-17)
 - (1) Grace is depreciated (4-7)
 - (2) Traditions obscure the commands of God (8-11)
 - (3) Consciences are burdened (12-13)
 - (4) Much detriment has come into the Church (14-17)
2. The Lutherans do not obstruct the traditions (18-20)
 - (1) They warned of error (19)
 - (2) They upheld the doctrines of grace (20)
3. Human traditions are not meritorious (21)
4. The Scriptures bear testimony in this matter (22-29)
 - (1) The witness of Christ, Matt. 15:3 (22)
 - (2) The witness of Paul, Rom. 14:17; Col. 2:16 (23-24)
 - (3) The witness of Peter, Acts 15:10 (27)
5. Lutheran teachers have been falsely accused (30-39)
 - (1) Contrary to accusations they encourage discipline (30-34)
 - (2) External discipline urged at all times (34)
 - (3) Christ commands discipline (35)
 - (4) Paul practiced self-denial (36)
6. Lutherans keep many traditions (40-45)
 - (1) Those which are conducive to good order (40-41)

- (2) Men are warned against seeking merit (41)
 - (3) Church history proves liberty in human rites (42-45)
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VI. OF MONASTIC VOWS

(ARTICLE XXVII)

What is taught, on our part, concerning Monastic Vows, (1) will be better understood, if it be remembered what has been the state of the monasteries, and how many things were daily done in those very monasteries contrary to the Canons. In Augustine's time, they were free associations. Afterward, (2) when discipline was corrupted, vows were everywhere added for the purpose of restoring discipline, as in a carefully planned prison. Gradually, many other observances were (3) added besides vows. And these fetters were laid upon many (4) before the lawful age, contrary to the Canons. Many also (5) entered into this kind of life through ignorance, being unable to judge their own strength, though they were of sufficient age. Being thus ensnared, they were compelled to remain, (6) even though some could have been freed by the provision of the Canons. And this was more the case in the convents of (7) women than of monks, although more consideration should have been shown the weaker sex. This rigor displeased (8) many good men before this time, who saw that young men and maidens were thrown into convents for a living, and what unfortunate results came of this procedure, and what scandals were created what snares were cast upon consciences! They were grieved that the authority of the Canons in so (9) momentous a matter was utterly despised and set aside.

To these evils, were added an opinion concerning vows, (10) which, it is well known, in former times, displeased even those monks who were more thoughtful. They taught that (11) vows were equal to Baptism; they taught that, by this kind of life, they merited forgiveness of sins and justification before God. Yea, they added that the monastic

life not only (12) merited righteousness before God, but even greater things, because it kept not only the precepts, but also the so-called "evangelical counsels."

Thus they made men believe that the profession of monasticism (13) was far better than Baptism, and that the monastic life was more meritorious than that of magistrates, that of pastors and such like, who serve their calling in accordance with God's commands, without any man-made services. None of these things can be denied; for they appear in their (14) own books.

What then came to pass in the monasteries? Aforetime, (15) they were schools of Theology and other branches, profitable to the Church; and thence pastors and bishops were obtained. Now it is another thing. It is needless to rehearse what is known to all. Aforetime they came together to learn; (16) now they feign that it is a kind of life instituted to merit grace and righteousness; yea, they preach that it is state of perfection, and they put it far above all other kinds of life ordained of God.

These things we have rehearsed without odious exaggeration, (17) to the end that the doctrine of our teachers, on this point, might be better understood. First, concerning such (18) as contract matrimony, they teach, on our part, that it is lawful for all men who are not fitted for single life to contract matrimony, because vows cannot annul the ordinance and commandments of God. But the commandment of God (19) is [1 Cor. 7:2]: "To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife." Nor is it the commandment only, but also (20) the creation and ordinance of God, which forces those to marry who are not excepted by a singular work of God, according to the text [Gen. 2:18]: "It is not good that the man should be alone." Therefore they do not sin who obey (21) this commandment and ordinance of God. What objection (22) can be raised to this? Let men extol the obligation of a vow as much as they list, yet shall they not bring to pass that the vow annuls the commandment of God. The Canons teach (23) that the right of the superior is excepted in every vow; much less, therefore, are these vows of force which are against the commandments of God.

Now if the obligation of vows could not be changed for (24) any cause whatever, the Roman Pontiffs could never have given dispensation; for it is not lawful for man to annul an obligation which is altogether divine. But the Roman (25) Pontiffs have prudently judged that leniency is to be observed in this obligation, and therefore we read that many times they have dispensed from vows. The case of the (26) King of Aragon who was called back from the monastery is well known, and there are also examples in our own times.

In the second place, Why do our adversaries exaggerate (27) the obligation or effect of a vow, when, at the same time, they have not a word to say of the nature of the vow itself, that it ought to be a thing possible, free, and chosen spontaneously and deliberately. But it is not known (28) to what extent perpetual chastity is in the power of man. And how few are there who have taken the vow spontaneously (29) and deliberately! Young men and maidens, before they are able to judge, are persuaded, and sometimes even compelled, to take the vow. Wherefore it is not fair to insist (30) so rigorously on the obligation, since it is granted by all that it is against the nature of a vow to take it without spontaneous and deliberate action.

Many canonical laws rescind vows made before the age of (31) fifteen; for before that age, there does not seem sufficient judgment in a person to decide concerning a perpetual life. Another Canon, granting even more liberty to the weakness (32) of man, adds a few years, and forbids a vow to be made before the age of eighteen. But whether we followed the (33) one or the other, the most part have an excuse for leaving the monasteries, because most of them have taken the vows before they reached these ages.

But, finally, even though the violation of a vow might (34) be rebuked, yet it seems not forthwith to follow that the marriages of such persons ought to be dissolved. For (35) Augustine denies that they ought to be dissolved (xxvii. *Quaest. I., Cap. Nuptarium*); and his authority is not lightly to be esteemed, although other men afterwards thought otherwise,

But although it appears that God's command concerning (36) marriage delivers many from their vows, yet our teachers introduce also another argument concerning vows, to show that they are void. For every service of God, ordained and chosen of men without the commandments of God to merit justification and grace, is wicked; as Christ says [Matt. 15:9]: "In vain do they worship me with the commandments of men." And Paul teaches everywhere that righteousness (37) is not to be sought by our own observances and acts of worship, devised by men, but that it comes by faith to those who believe that they are received by God into grace for Christ's sake.

But it is evident that monks have taught that services of (38) man's making satisfy for sins and merit grace and justification. What else is that but to detract from the glory of Christ and to obscure and deny the righteousness of faith? It follows, therefore, that the vows thus commonly taken (39) have been wicked services, and, consequently, are void. For a wicked vow, taken against the commandment of (40) God, is not valid; for (as the Canon says) no vow ought to bind men to wickedness.

Paul says [Gal. 5:4] "Christ is become of no effect unto (41) you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." They, therefore, who want to be justified by (42) their vows, are made void of Christ and fall from grace. For such as ascribe justification to vows, ascribe to their (43) own works that which properly belongs to the glory of Christ. But it is undeniable that the monks have taught (44) that, by their vows and observances, they were justified, and merited forgiveness of sins, yea, they invented still greater absurdities, saying that they could give others a share in their works. If any one should be inclined to enlarge on (45) these things with evil intent, how many things could he bring together, whereof even the monks are now ashamed! Over and above this, they persuaded men that services of (46) man's making were a state of Christian perfection. And is (47) not this assigning justification to works? It is no light (48) offence in the Church to set forth to the people a service devised by men, without the commandment of God, and to teach that such service justifies men.

For the righteousness of faith in Christ, which chiefly ought to be in the Church, is obscured, when this wonderful worshipping of angels, with its show of poverty, humility and chastity, is cast before the eyes of men.

Furthermore, the precepts of God and the true service of (49) God are obscured when men hear that only monks are in a state of perfection. For Christian perfection is to fear God from the heart, again to conceive great faith, and to trust that, for Christ's sake, we have a gracious God, to ask God, and assuredly to expect his aid in all things that, according to our calling, are to be borne; and meanwhile, to be diligent in outward good works, and to serve our calling. In these things consist the true perfection and the true service (50) of God. It does not consist in the unmarried life, or in begging, or in vile apparel. But the people conceive many pernicious (51) opinions from the false commendations of monastic life. They hear unmarried life praised above measure; therefore they lead their married life with offence to their consciences. They hear that only beggars are perfect; (53) therefore they keep their possessions and do business with offence to their consciences. They hear that it is an evangelical (54) counsel not to avenge; therefore some in private life are not afraid to take revenge, for they hear that it is but a counsel, and not a commandment; while others judge that (55) the Christian cannot properly hold a civil office, or be a magistrate.

There are on record examples of men who, forsaking marriage (56) and the administration of the Commonwealth, have hid themselves in monasteries. This they called fleeing from the (57) world, and seeking a kind of life which should be more pleasing to God. Neither did they see that God ought to be served in those commandments which he himself has given, and not in commandments devised by men. A good and (58) perfect kind of life is that which has for it the commandment of God. It is necessary to admonish men of these things (59). And before these times, Gerson rebuked this error concerning (60) perfection, and testified that, in his day, it was a new saying that the monastic life is a state of perfection.

So many wicked opinions are inherent in the vows, such as (61) that they justify, that they constitute Christian perfection, that they keep the counsels and commandments, that they have works of supererogation. All these things, since they are false and empty, make vows null and void.

1. Conditions prevailing in the monasteries (1-16)

- (1) Actions contrary to the Canons (1)
- (2) Formerly free associations; now discipline added by vows (2)
- (3) Observances added to vows (3)
- (3) Fetters laid upon the young (4)
- (4) The women suffered most (7)
- (5) Monks add merit to vows, "evangelical counsels" (10-16)

2. Monastic vows are not to be considered obligatory (17-61)

- (1) Many vows have been broken (17-26)
- (2) God does not command them (18-19)
- (3) The Canons provide for liberty (27-33)
- (4) They are wrong because used for merit (36-37)
- (5) They obscure the true service of God (38-40)
- (6) They obscure the merits of Christ (41-48)
- (7) They encourage a false perfection (49-61)

VII. OF ECCLESIASTICAL POWER

(ARTICLE XXVIII)

There has been great controversy concerning the Power of (1) Bishops, in which some have awkwardly confounded the power of the Church and the power of the sword. And (2) from this confusion very great wars and tumults have resulted, while the Pontiffs, emboldened by the power of the Keys, not only have instituted new services and burdened consciences with reservation of cases, but have also undertaken to transfer the kingdoms of this world, and to take the Empire from the Emperor. These wrongs have long since (3) been rebuked in the Church by learned and godly men.

Therefore, our teachers, for the comforting of men's consciences, (4) were constrained to show the difference between the power of the Church and the power of the sword, and taught that both of them, because of God's commandment, are to be held in reverence and honor, as among the chief blessings of God on earth.

But this is their opinion, that the power of the Keys, or (5) the power of the bishops, according to the Gospel, is a power or commandment of God, to preach the Gospel, to remit and retain sins, and to administer sacraments. For with that (6) commandment, Christ sends forth his Apostles [John 20:21 sqq.]: "As my Father has sent me, even so send I you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." [Mark 16:15]: "Go, preach the Gospel to (7) every creature."

This power is exercised only by teaching or preaching the (8) Gospel and administering the sacraments, according to the calling, either to many or to individuals. For thereby are granted, not bodily, but eternal things, as eternal righteousness, the Holy Ghost, eternal life. These things cannot come (9) but by the ministry of the Word and the sacraments. As Paul says [Rom. 1:16]: "The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Therefore, since (10) the power of the Church grants eternal things, and is exercised only by the ministry of the Word,

it does not interfere with civil government; no more than the art of singing interferes with civil government. For civil government deals (11) with other things than does the Gospel; the civil rulers defend not souls, but bodies and bodily things against manifest injuries, and restrain men with the sword and bodily punishments in order to preserve civil justice and peace.

Therefore the power of the Church and the civil power (12) must not be confounded. The power of the Church has its own mission, to teach the Gospel and to administer the sacraments. Let it not break into the office of another; let (13) it not transfer the kingdoms of this world; let it not abrogate the laws of civil rulers; let it not abolish lawful obedience; let it not interfere with judgments concerning civil ordinances or contracts; let it not prescribe laws to civil rulers concerning the form of the commonwealth. As Christ says [John 18:36]: (14) "My kingdom is not of this world"; also [Luke 12:14]: "Who made me a judge or a divider over you?" (15). Paul also says [Phil. 3:20]: "Our citizenship is in (16) heaven"; [2 Cor. 10:4]: "The weapons of our warfare (17) are not carnal; but mighty through God to the casting down of imaginations." After this manner, our teachers discriminate (18) between the duties of both these powers, and command that both be honored and acknowledged as gifts and blessings of God.

If bishops have any power of the sword, that power they (19) have, not as bishops, by the commission of the Gospel, but by human law, having received it of Kings and Emperors, for the civil administration of what is theirs. This, however, is another office than the ministry of the Gospel.

When, therefore, a question arises concerning the jurisdiction (20) of bishops, civil authority must be distinguished from ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Again, according to the Gospel, (21) or, as they say, according to Divine Law, to the bishops as bishops, that is, to those to whom has been committed the ministry of the Word and the sacraments, no jurisdiction belongs, except to forgive sins, to discern doctrine, to reject doctrines contrary to the Gospel, and to exclude from the communion of the Church, wicked men,

whose wickedness is known, and this without human force, simply by the Word. Herein the congregations are bound by Divine Law to obey (22) them, according to Luke 10:16: "He that heareth you, heareth me."

But when they teach or ordain anything against the Gospel, (23) then the congregations have a commandment of God prohibiting obedience [Matt. 7:15]: "Beware of false (24) prophets"; [Gal. 1:8]: "Though an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel, let him be accursed"; [2 Cor. 13:8]: "We can do nothing against the truth; but for the (25) truth." Also [v. 10]: "The power which the Lord hath (26) given me to edification, and not to destruction." So, also, (27) the Canonical Laws command (II. Q. vii. Cap., *Sacerdotes* and Cap. *Oves*). And Augustine (*Contra Petilianum Epistolam*) (28): "Not even to Catholic bishops must we submit, if they chance to err, or hold anything contrary to the Canonical Scriptures of God."

If they have any other power of jurisdiction, in hearing (29) and judging certain cases, as of matrimony or of tithes, they have it by human law. But where the ordinaries fail, princes are bound, even against their will, to dispense justice to their subjects, for the maintenance of peace.

Moreover, it is disputed whether bishops or pastors (30) have the right to introduce ceremonies in the Church, and to make laws concerning meats, holydays and degrees, that is, orders of ministers, etc. They that claim this right (31) for the bishops, refer to this testimony [John 16:12, 13]: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." They also refer to the (32) example of the Apostles, who commanded to abstain from blood and from things strangled [Acts 15:29]. They refer (33) to the Sabbath Day, as having been changed into the Lord's Day, contrary to the Decalogue, as it seems. Neither is there any example whereof they make more than concerning the changing of the Sabbath Day. Great, say they, is the power of the Church, since it has dispensed with one of the Ten Commandments!

But, concerning this question, it is taught on our part

as has been shown above (34), that bishops have no power to decree anything against the Gospel. The Canonical laws teach the same thing (*Dist. ix.*). Now it is against Scripture to establish (35) or require the observance of any traditions, to the end that, by such observance, we may make satisfaction for sins, or merit grace and righteousness. For the glory of Christ's (36) merit is dishonored when, by such observances, we undertake to merit justification. But it is manifest that, by such belief, (37) traditions have almost infinitely multiplied in the Church, the doctrine concerning faith and the righteousness of faith being meanwhile suppressed. For gradually more holydays were made, fasts appointed, new ceremonies and services in honor of saints instituted; because the authors of such things thought that, by these works, they were meriting grace. Thus, in (38) times past, the Penitential Canons increased, whereof we will see some traces in the satisfactions.

Again, the authors of traditions do contrary to the command (39) of God, when they find matters of sin in foods, in days, and like things, and burden the Church with bondage of the law, as if there ought to be among Christians, in order to merit justification, a service like the Levitical, the arrangement of which God has committed to the Apostles and bishops. For thus some of them write; and the Pontiffs in some (40) measure seem to be misled by the example of the law of Moses. Hence are such burdens, as that they make it mortal (41) sin, even without offence to others, to do manual labor on holydays, to omit the Canonical Hours, that certain foods defile the conscience, that fastings are works which appease God, that sin in a reserved case cannot be forgiven but by the authority of him who reserved it; whereas the Canons themselves speak only of the reserving of the ecclesiastical penalty, and not of the reserving of the guilt.

Whence have the bishops the right to lay these traditions (42) upon the Church for the ensnaring of consciences, when Peter [Acts 15:10] forbids to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, and Paul says [2 Cor. 13:10] that the power given him was to edification, not to destruc-

tion? Why, therefore, do they increase sins by these traditions?

But there are clear testimonies, which prohibit the making (43) of such traditions, either to merit grace, or as things necessary to salvation. Paul says [Col. 2:16]: "Let no (44) man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect to an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days"; [V. 20, 23]: "If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the (45) world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances (touch not; taste not; handle not, which all are to perish with the using); after the commandments and doctrines of men? which things have indeed a show of wisdom." Also (46) in [Tit. 1:14] he openly forbids traditions: "Not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men that turn from the truth." And Christ [Matt. 15:14] says of those (47) who require traditions: "Let them alone; they be blind (48) leaders of the blind"; and he rebukes such service [v. 13]: "Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be plucked up."

If bishops have the right to burden churches with infinite (49) traditions, and to ensnare consciences, why does Scripture so often prohibit to make and to listen to traditions? Why does it call them "doctrines of devils"? [1 Tim. 4:1]. Did the Holy Ghost in vain forewarn of these things?

Since, therefore, ordinances instituted as things necessary, (50) or with an opinion of meriting grace, are contrary to the Gospel, it follows that it is not lawful for any bishop to institute or exact such services. For it is necessary that the doctrine (51) of Christian liberty be preserved in the churches, namely, that the bondage of the Law is not necessary to justification, as it is written in the Epistle to the Galatians [5:1]: "Be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." It is necessary that the chief article of the Gospel be preserved, (52) to wit, that we obtain grace freely by faith in Christ, and not for certain observances or acts of worship devised by men.

What, then, are we to think of the Sunday and like

rites (53) in the house of God? To this we answer, that it is lawful for bishops or pastors to make ordinances that things be done orderly in the Church, not that thereby we should merit grace or make satisfaction for sins, or that consciences be bound to judge them necessary services, and to think that it is sin to break them without offence to others. So Paul (54) ordains [1 Cor. 11:5], that women should cover their heads in the congregation [1 Cor. 14:30], that interpreters of Scripture be heard in order in the church, etc.

It is proper that the churches should keep such ordinances (55) for the sake of charity and tranquillity, so far that one do not offend another, that all things be done in the churches in order, and without confusion; but so that consciences be not (56) burdened to think that they be necessary to salvation, or to judge that they sin when they break them without offence to others; as no one will say that a woman sins who goes out in public with her head uncovered, provided only that no offence be given.

Of this kind, is the observance of the Lord's Day, Easter, (57) Pentecost, and like holydays and rites. For those who judge (58) that, by the authority of the Church, the observance of the Lord's Day instead of the Sabbath Day was ordained as a thing necessary, do greatly err. Scripture has abrogated the (59) Sabbath Day; for it teaches that, since the Gospel has been revealed, all the ceremonies of Moses can be omitted. And (60) yet, because it was necessary to appoint a certain day, that the people might know when they ought to come together, it appears that the Church [the Apostles] designated the Lord's Day for this purpose; and this day seems to have been chosen all the more for this additional reason, that men might have an example of Christian liberty, and might know that the keeping neither of the Sabbath, nor of any other day, is necessary.

There are monstrous disputations concerning the changing (61) of the law, the ceremonies of the new law, the changing of the Sabbath Day, which all have sprung from the false belief that there must needs be in the Church a

service like to the Levitical, and that Christ had given commission to the Apostles and bishops to devise new ceremonies as necessary to salvation. These errors crept into the Church when (62) the righteousness of faith was not clearly enough taught. Some dispute that the keeping of the Lord's Day is not indeed (63) of divine right; but in a manner so. They prescribe concerning holydays, how far it is lawful to work. What else (64) are such disputations but snares of consciences? For although they endeavor to modify the traditions, yet the equity can never be perceived as long as the opinion remains that they are necessary, which must needs remain where the righteousness of faith and Christian liberty are disregarded.

The Apostles commanded to abstain from blood. Who (65) doth now observe it? And yet they that do it not, sin not; for not even the Apostles themselves wanted to burden consciences with such bondage; but they forbade it for a time, to avoid offence. For, in any decree, we must perpetually (66) consider what is the aim of the Gospel. Scarcely any Canons (67) are kept with exactness, and, from day to day, many go out of use even with those who are the most zealous advocates of traditions. Neither can due regard be paid to consciences (68) unless this equity be observed, that we know that the Canons are kept without holding them to be necessary, and that no harm is done consciences, even though traditions go out of use.

But the bishops might easily retain the lawful obedience (69) of the people, if they would not insist on the observance of such traditions as cannot be kept with a good conscience. Now they command celibacy; they admit none, unless they (70) swear that they will not teach the pure doctrine of the Gospel. The churches do not ask that the bishops should restore (71) concord at the expense of their honor; which, nevertheless, it would be proper for good pastors to do. They ask only (72) that they would release unjust burdens which are new and have been received contrary to the custom of the Church Catholic. It may be that there were plausible reasons for (73) some of these ordinances; and yet they are not adapted to later time. It is also evident that some

were adopted (74) through erroneous conceptions. Therefore, it would be befitting the clemency of the Pontiffs to mitigate them now; because such a modification does not shake the unity of the Church. For many human traditions have been changed in process of time, as the Canons themselves show. But if it (75) be impossible to obtain a mitigation of such observances as cannot be kept without sin, we are bound to follow the Apostolic rule [Acts 5:29], which commands us to obey God rather than men. Peter [1 Pet. 5:3] forbids bishops to be (76) lords, and to rule over the churches. Now it is not our design (77) to wrest the government from the bishops, but this one thing is asked, namely, that they allow the Gospel to be purely taught, and that they relax some few observances which cannot be kept without sin. But if they make no concession, (78) it is for them to see how they shall give account to God for having, by their obstinacy, caused a schism.

1. The Power of the Keys is not to be confused with civil powers (1-11)

- (1) The Power of the Keys is to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments (5-10)
- (2) Civil powers deal with the affairs of men (10-11)

2. The jurisdiction of bishops (12-33)

- (1) They may not administer civil affairs by divine right, but by human (12-19)
- (2) They may administer the affairs of the churches (21-22)
- (3) They are not to teach contrary to the Gospel (23-28)
- (4) They are not to introduce ceremonies contrary to the Gospel (29-53)

3. Ceremonies which may be observed (53-58)

- (1) Those which promote good order (53-54)
- (2) Those which preserve charity and Christian liberty (55-60)
- (3) Those which are not enforced as necessary (61-68)

4. Appeal to bishops to relax some observances which cannot be kept without sin (69-78)

CONCLUSION

These are the Chief Articles which seem to be in the controversy. (1) For although we might have spoken of more Abuses, yet to avoid undue length, we have set forth the chief points, from which the rest may be readily judged. There have (2) been great complaints concerning indulgences, pilgrimages, and the abuses of excommunications. The parishes have been vexed in many ways by the dealers in indulgences. There were endless contentions between the pastors and the monks concerning the parochial rites, confessions, burials, sermons on extraordinary occasions, and innumerable other things. Things of this sort we have passed over, so that (3) the chief points in this matter, having been briefly set forth, might be the most readily understood. Nor has anything (4) been here said or adduced to the reproach of any one. Only (5) those things have been recounted, whereof we thought that it was necessary to speak, so that it might be understood that, in doctrine and ceremonies, nothing has been received on our part, against Scripture or the Church Catholic, since it is manifest that we have taken most diligent care that no new and ungodly doctrine should creep into our churches.

The above articles we desire to present in accordance with the edict of Your Imperial Majesty, so that our Confession should therein be exhibited, and a summary of the doctrine of our teachers might be discerned. If anything

further be desired, we are ready, God willing, to present ampler information according to the Scriptures.

JOHN, Duke of Saxony, Elector.

GEORGE, Margrave of Brandenburg.

ERNEST, Duke of Lüneburg.

PHILIP, Landgrave of Hesse.

JOHN FREDERICK, Duke of Saxony.

FRANCIS, Duke of Lüneburg.

WOLFGANG, Prince of Anhalt.

SENATE AND MAGISTRACY of Nuremberg.

SENATE of Reutlingen.

1. Only the chief articles of controversy included (1)

2. Other abuses have been omitted, such as indulgences, pilgrimages, etc. (2-3)

3. The tenor of the confession has been one of kindness (4)

3. Reference has been made to necessary doctrines only (5)

4. Care exercised that no new doctrines should creep into the churches (5)

5. Assurance is given of further information if desired (5)

6. The confession is signed by the princes

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